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Here Comes The Whistleman

Mega 2024 Jazz Fest Guide!

Sarah Vaughan at 100

Saluting Sassy

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"Cosmic Duke kicked off my career"

Julian Lage

Takes Five

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Lizz Wright

Out Of The Shadows

PLUS:

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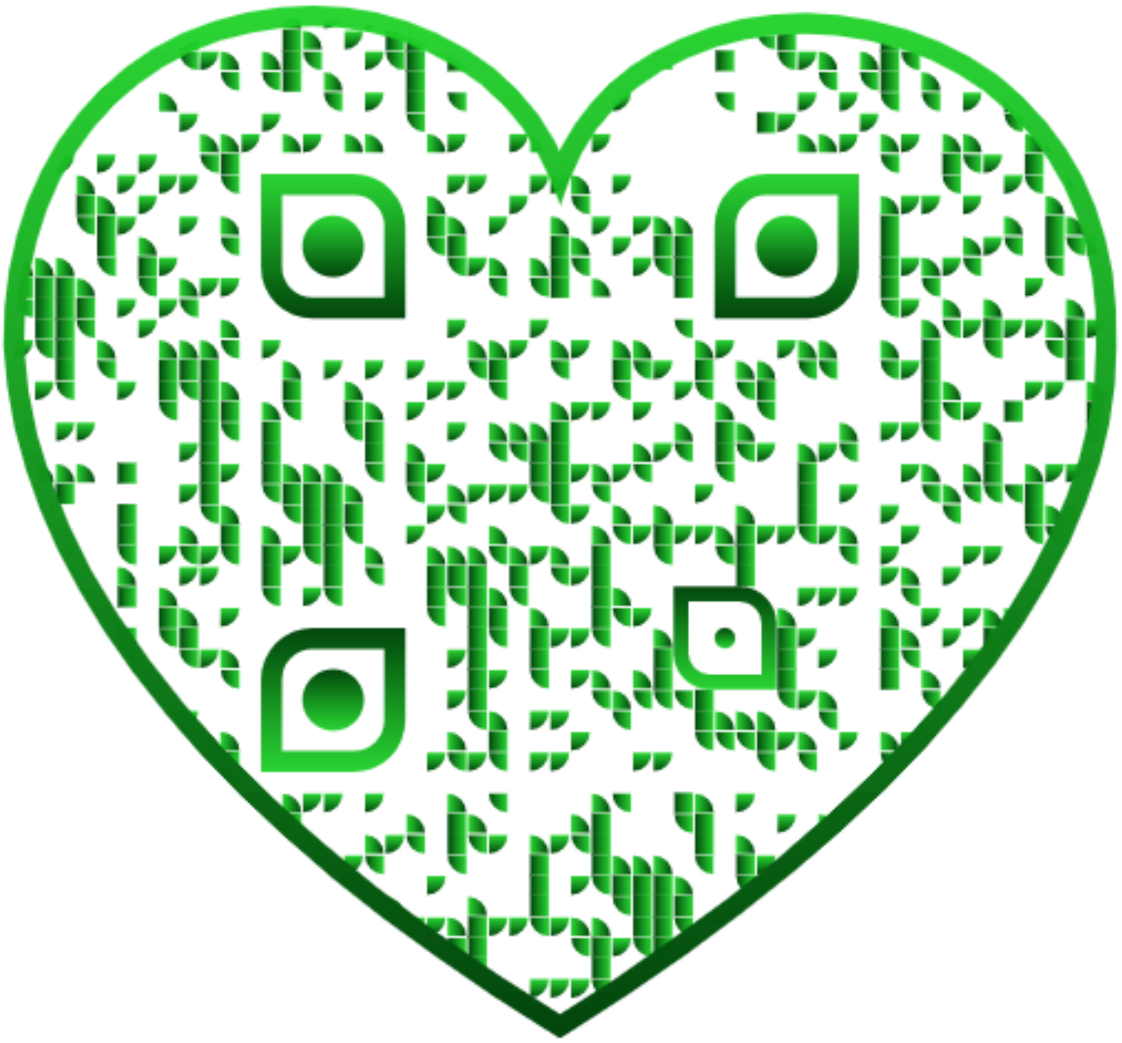

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Photo: Tony Smith

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News
By Mike Flynn, Kevin Whitlock and Jon Newey

For the latest breaking news visit **www.jazzwise.com**

Dave Douglas | un.procedure | Sam Eastmond | Zara McFarlane

Zorn's *Bagatelles*, Clowes/Douglas and un.procedure commission power-up Parabola Cheltenham programme

This year's Cheltenham Jazz Festival, which runs from 1 to 6 May, features a programme of contrasting events at the Parabola Arts Centre (PAC) across a wide spectrum of cutting-edge sounds.

Running for three days and nights from 3 May, things kick off with pianist Sultan Stevenson and his Trio who play music from his well-received debut LP, *Faithful One* (Whirlwind Recordings). This is followed by a collaboration between the players of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra's 18-piece ensemble who line up with UK pianist Nikki Yeoh on music that integrates an original poem as a central motif. Entitled 'Nucleus' (a new NYJO-commissioned piece) the music is dedicated and inspired by legendary British trumpeter Ian Carr, who was a close friend and mentor of Yeoh's and whose legacy she celebrates here.

Saturday 5 May at PAC gets going early at 11am with a link up between students from nearby Birmingham Conservatoire and the prestigious Siena Jazz-Accademia Nazionale del Jazz in Italy and Hamburg Hochschule for a showcase of emerging jazz talent.

Trumpeter Charlotte Keeffe then presents her Right Here, Right Now, Quartet whose line-up includes bassist Ashley John Long, drummer Ben Handysides, and Let Spin guitarist Moss Freed, with Keeffe playing both flugelhorn and trumpet on her mix of composed and improvised originals (PAC, 1.30pm). Fusion grooves then abound from drummer David Ola's Lucumí Project inspired by the West Africa and Caribbean diasporas (PAC, 4pm).

Brit jazz stars Kit Downes and Norma Winstone will combine on jointly composed original material as part of a new project that will be released as an album on ECM later this year, featuring their favourite compositions as well as those of John Taylor and Ralph Towner (PAC, 6pm). And there's another festival first with US trumpeter Dave Douglas lining up with saxophonist Trish Clowes (who is signed to his Greenleaf imprint) to play music in tribute to Wayne Shorter, with 'EYES UP' specially written for this performance and backed by a full band (PAC, 8.15pm).

The Parabola's Sunday programme gets underway with London composer Sam Eastmond's acclaimed arrangements of John Zorn's *Bagatelles*; Eastmond is the first British musician to have been entrusted with realising a selection of the US composer's *300 Bagatelles*. It is also the first large ensemble interpretation of these works, which here features a 12-piece UK band for what will be its first festival performance (PAC, 2.30pm).

Closing out the PAC Sunday sessions will be trio un.procedure plus (featuring saxophonist-composer Cassie Kinoshi, Piera Onacko on synths and Nathan England-Jones on drums and electronics); the 'plus' part is Dave Stanley (aka GURIBOSH) who will provide visuals for this show (PAC 5pm).

Other timings now confirmed include Friday night at the Town Hall featuring Orchestra Baobab with Nubiyan Twist (8pm), Jazz Arena performances on Saturday from singer Allysha Joy (4pm), Steely Dan tribute band The Royal Scammers (4pm) and saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin (7.30pm). Sunday's shows include singer Zara McFarlane who presents her Music of Sarah Vaughan show (12.30pm) and US trumpeter Theo Croker (7.30pm) plus a bonus Bank Holiday Monday show from corto.alto (6.30pm). Town Hall headliners on Saturday 3 May are: Brad Mehldau Trio (2pm) and Dee Dee Bridgewater (5.30pm), and on 4 May, Fatoumata Diawara (2pm) and Courtney Pine (5.30pm).

Jazzwise is festival media partner.
www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/jazz

Jazz in Britain launches Jazz Now imprint with Watts' Eternal Triangle

The Jazz in Britain label has announced the first two releases on its new music imprint, Jazz Now. These come in the form of improv sax veteran Trevor Watts' acclaimed Eternal Triangle trio (which also features percussionist Jamie Harris and pianist Veryan Weston) whose album *Gravity* is released on 29 March. This is followed by Kevin Figes' new sextet's debut release, *You Are Here*, which is issued on 12 April. The set features Figes' new arrangements of five pieces by Keith Tippett, plus compositions by Elton Dean, Harry Miller, Dudu Pukwana and others, in "a loving tribute to friends, mentors and collaborators no longer with us". **www.jazznow.bandcamp.com**

‘Year of Alice’ kicks off with unreleased recording of 1971 Carnegie Hall concert

The Impulse! Records imprint has announced the release, on 22 March, of *Alice Coltrane - The Carnegie Hall Concert*, a recording that comes from a special gala show intended to raise funds for the Integral Yoga Institute, and sees Coltrane backed by an all-star group of musicians; the show will be released in full for the very first time.

Held four years after her husband John Coltrane’s untimely passing and recorded by Impulse! for eventual release, the concert at Carnegie Hall the concert arrived at a pivotal moment in both Coltrane’s career and her spiritual journey: she had just released her fourth solo album, *Journey in Satchidananda*, and had deepened her spiritual quest over a five-week trip to India. Her band that night added two members of Satchidananda’s circle – Kumar Kramer and Tulsi Reynolds, playing harmonium and tamboura, respectively – to a large jazz ensemble comprising two saxophonists, Pharoah Sanders and Archie Shepp, two bassists, Jimmy Garrison and Cecil McBee, and two drummers, Ed Blackwell and Clifford Jarvis.

The set includes tunes from *Journey in Satchidananda*, followed by two compositions by John Coltrane and served as a sign of things to come, a chronicle of an artist during a musical and spiritual emergence. This year Impulse! and Verve Label Group have partnered with The John & Alice Coltrane Home to launch the ‘Year of Alice’, a year-long celebration of Alice Coltrane’s profound work.

At the centre of the celebration are Alice Coltrane’s ground-breaking recordings for Impulse!, and the label will be working in tandem with The John & Alice Coltrane Home on various activities throughout the year. The extended celebrations kicked off at Birdland on 22 February with Ravi Coltrane, Michelle Coltrane, Brandee Younger and others taking part in a special night of performers and guest speakers.

Read our review of *The Carnegie Hall Concert* on page 48 this issue.

Editor’s Note

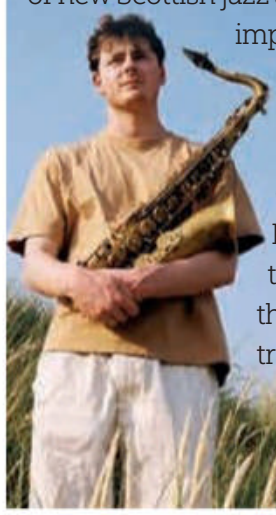
The courage to seek out the new, and embrace change, is one of the fundamental elements of jazz: there is no fixed point and the work to evolve and develop as a player of this challenging music never stops. It’s why Shabaka Hutchings’ decision to put down the saxophone (for now) is a profound one, with the flute such a contrasting and refined instrument which requires a delicacy of technique that’s a different world from the lung-busting power of high-octane sax playing. It also speaks to an authentic approach to creativity – that’s not about producing ‘content’ or gaining ‘followers’ (who can now easily be bought to inflate an online profile) – and is genuinely risky. The resulting album, *Perceive its Beauty, Acknowledge its Grace*, will surprise many for its uplifting, immersive and meditative qualities, and proves the old maxim: “life begins at the end of your comfort zone”. Shabaka’s found new life aplenty with this bold and uncompromising move to walk his own path.

Mike Flynn, Editor, *Jazzwise*

Scottish Jazz panels added to 2024 Jazzahead! programme

Jazzahead! returns to Messe Bremen from 11-13 April for a packed three days and nights showcasing a vast international line up of bands, solo artists, talks, panels and a huge number of meetings between professionals from all corners of the global jazz scene.

Among the panels being presented will be Creative Scotland’s ‘How do the traditions of indigenous music in any given country bring a distinctive style to its jazz scene?’ This timely topic comes in the wake of a resurgence of new Scottish jazz artists making an impact across the UK and internationally.



Hosting the panel is Head of Music at Creative Scotland, Alan Morrison, who says: “In the past, the occasional thread of Scotland’s traditional music has been woven into our jazz, but you can currently hear it more clearly in compositions by Fergus McCreadie, Matt Carmichael, Norman Willmore and others. Jazz, by its nature, is a global genre but sometimes, however, the indigenous music of any country will influence its jazz scene and create something truly distinctive that draws more deeply from individual cultural identity.

“This discussion panel at Jazzahead! will explore the topic of how unique heritage can embellish our jazz soundscapes. Jazzahead! operates on a global platform, where new ideas can be developed in person and emerging styles put directly in the spotlight. Reflecting Jazzahead’s ‘New Horizons’ motto and this year’s focus on Africa, we can witness first-hand how indigenous traditions shape the jazz being made by artists today in different parts of the planet. It’ll be interesting to hear how musicians address this creative challenge, how promoters view the potential of this genre mix and how audiences react to the latest incarnations of this always exciting, ever evolving artform.”

Two Scottish bands will perform as part of Jazzahead!’s European Showcases with folk influenced saxophonist Matt Carmichael and spiritual/soul jazz group Mama Terra both set to appear, with fast rising pianist Sultan Stevenson also confirmed for a showcase performance with his Trio – these encouraging signs that UK jazz artists are back on the radar after Brexit and the Covid 19 pandemic made touring Europe extremely challenging for new artists.

To register as a delegate, and for the full programme visit www.jazzahead.de

Surman, Pine, Iles, and Garland are all booked in for the Manchester Jazz Festival this May!

Clockwise: Nikki Iles, Laura Misch, John Surman and Courtney Pine

This year's Manchester Jazz Festival runs from 17 to 26 May at venues and sites across the city, showcasing the latest up and coming talent from across the North of England, alongside some of the UK's leading contemporary jazz artists.

Headliners include Brit jazz saxophone greats John Surman, Courtney Pine, and Tim Garland; leading German saxophonist Daniel Erdmann, acclaimed composer Nikki Iles with her Orchestra; pianist Julian Joseph, Mercury nominated trumpeter Laura Jurd, and newcomers, saxophonist Laura Misch and Nubiyan Twist.

Building on the success of last year, Manchester Jazz Festival begins with a packed free-entry opening weekender at the vibrant First Street neighbourhood from 17-19 May. There will be three event stages including the Main Stage, *Ask* Garden Stage and HOME stage, each celebrating the breadth of the city's home-grown scene and beyond: bands emerging through the MJF artist development programmes, alongside national and international talent, plus family-friendly activities and food and drink.

Three new venue partners join the MJF this year, with The Deaf Institute (The Lodge), Stoller Hall and The Carlton Club in Whalley Range, presenting gigs alongside MJF regulars St Ann's Church, Matt & Phreds, RNCM and Forsyth Music Shop. The festival closes with an extended weekend-long party at Band on the Wall packing in sax don Courtney Pine and newcomers such as dazzling bassist Adam Ben Ezra. MJF is also hosting a new *MJF Originals* commission 'Séance' – a musical performance, transforming The Deaf Institute into a space for connection. The line-up so far announced includes Nikki Iles Jazz Orchestra; John Surman: *Words Unspoken* (18 and 25 May, RNCM). The Wagon Train + Maja Bugge, with Evans and Gregory: SORTLAND, Daniel Erdmann's *Thérapie de Couple* (20-22 May, The Carlton Club). Gypsies of Bohemia, Kemani Anderson, Band Pres Llareggub Brass Band, M&P x MJF Open Jam (led by Johnny Hunter), Slow Down Motion, The Mudez Project, The Gelatos, The Vinyl Steppers (17-25 May, Matt and Phreds). Trish Clowes & Ross Stanley (24 May, St Ann's Church). Julian Joseph (24 May, Forsyth Music). Tim Garland's Lighthouse Trio 20th Anniversary Tour (24 May, The Stoller Hall). Courtney Pine, Nubiyan Twist, Adam Ben Ezra, Mr Scruff x New Genea DJ + Me Gusta DJs, Laura Misch, Laura Jurd's Big Friendly Band, Sarāb, Close Counters, Fallen Flags, D'Accord!, Awen Ensemble, Bianca Gannon Ensemble and Carole Nelson Trio (23-26 May, Band on the Wall). **For more information and tickets, visit manchesterjazz.com**

BACK IN THE DAY...

Nowadays, 'the Six' refers to Chelsea's 606 Jazz Club on Lots Road, but in the mid-1960s before the 606 originally started at 606 King's Road, the prime Chelsea jazz venue/pub was the Six Bells jazz club, also on King's Road and sometimes called 'the Six'. Promoted each week by Jim Godbolt – a much-missed jazz everyman who started out managing George Webb's Dixielanders in 1946, working with Humph, managing the unruly Mick Mulligan jazz band, before becoming a writer, electricity meter reader, editor of *Jazz at Ronnie Scott's* (aka *JARS*) magazine and author of *A History of Jazz in Britain 1919-1950 and 1950-70* – his booking policy unveiled the modernist trying to escape the bowler hat and waistcoat clutches of the trad scene, as exemplified by this April 1963 *Melody Maker* ad. Drummer John Cox's Fat John's Band were fresh from recording a contemporary hard-bop session at Pye studios, including Ray Warleigh, Pete Lemer and Danny Thompson (now released as *Honesty* on Cherry Red records); John Picard and John Mumford added the 'bone bounce to a boozy Saturday; former trad banjoist/raver Pete Deuchar, whose earlier recruits included John McLaughlin and Ginger Baker, switched to R&B for his Country Blues combo and the Rustix Jumptet had dumped trad for Ellington. In later days Godbolt was an inveterate jazz-grumbler and during one lengthy grouch somehow collared this writer into a doing a monthly column for *JARS*, bless him. **Jon Newey**

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COUNTRY BLUES

FUTURE MOVERS

NAME: Olivia Cuttill
INSTRUMENT: Trumpet

EXPERIENCE AND INFLUENCES: Raised in East London, Olivia Cuttill started playing music at a very young age, getting drum lessons from her father. At 10 she started playing trumpet, by 16 she was exploring jazz music and from that moment on, that was it... Today Olivia can be heard playing across the UK with her own Quintet, as well as being a member of Mangorata, Ferg's Imaginary Big Band and Sunkissed Child. She's also opened for Nubya Garcia, Theon Cross, corto.alto and Roberto Fonseca, and recently released her new album *The Whole Damn Plan*.

THIS FUTURE MOVER SAYS: "I've always felt like playing music was never a choice for me, it was just something I've always loved and always knew I wanted to do, no decision necessary. Being able to play music for a living is a dream for me and I feel so lucky to do it. Improvising is such an exciting and exhilarating way to express yourself. If i could spend the rest of my life playing the music I love, I'd be living the dream!"

See Olivia Cuttill play Ronnie Scott's Future Movers Late Shows on 5 and 6 April led by Phil Meadows (alto sax) and featuring Scottie Thompson (piano), Joe MacLaren (bass) and Jack Robson (drums). More info at www.ronniescotts.co.uk

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Joe Armon-Jones, Matana Roberts and more lined up for Roundhouse In The Round Fest

Camden's historic Roundhouse has announced the full line-up for this year's In the Round festival, which runs from 18 to 27 April. *The Songs of Joni Mitchell* show featuring Emeli Sandé, Eska, Kate Stables, Lail Arad, Sam Amidon, Vashti Bunyan, and hosted by Cerys Matthews opens the series of events on 18 April.

Several key jazz names are among the varied lineup, with Ezra Collective's keyboardist Joe Armon-Jones playing tunes from his album, *Turn to Clear View* (21 April). Also appearing will be US saxophonist/Matana Roberts in a collaboration with writer/performance artist Lonnie Holley (26 April).

And, as previously revealed in *Jazzwise*, triple Grammy Award winning singer Samara Joy closes out the festival with an in-the-round show on 27 April. Further artists appearing are: Tirzah (19 Apr); Vashti Bunyan (20 Apr); Jlin (23 Apr); Death Songbook: Paraorchestra with Brett Anderson & Charles Hazlewood plus special guest Gwenno (24 Apr) and Lucy Rose (25 Apr).

For full details and tickets visit www.roundhouse.org.uk/whats-on/in-the-round-festival

70 YEARS AGO – Sarah Vaughan

It's hardly surprising that, when she emerged in the mid-1940s, the record industry looked on Sarah Vaughan less as a Billie Holiday-like 'interpreter' but more a Lena Horne-style vehicle for selling pop-songs. Despite the promising early singles for small labels, when she was signed to majors like Columbia and then Mercury she was lumbered with all sorts of forgettable rubbish – 'Broken Hearted Melody' still comes up when you enter her name online.

At Columbia, there were occasional jazz outings, a big-band 'Perdido' and a small-group session including Miles, but it wasn't until Mercury started its specialist jazz label EmArcy that she recorded with just her regular trio. On 2 April 1954 (six days after her 30th birthday) they entered the studio to make *Swingin' Easy*, a 10-inch LP of eight standard songs, later augmented by four more for a 12-inch album, which showed just how influential she would become.

It's probably 20 years since I saw the young Alicia Keys on TV, doing note-for-note the *Swingin' Easy* version of 'Lover Man', but that was nothing compared to first hearing Sarah's scat routine 'Shulie-A-Bop' (named after the triplet figure repeated four times on the same note). It was decades before I realised she'd improvised on the chords of 'Summertime' but how hip that she gave the trio 16 bars each and name-checked them: John Malachi (deputising for her pianist Jimmy Jones), bassist Joe Benjamin and Roy Haynes. As Haynes said, "She wasn't a 'singer', she was a musician." It's also reflective of the industry that this "composition" was co-credited to her husband/manager, ex-trumpeter George Treadwell – probably the only way to prevent it being copyrighted by some record company employee.

Brian Priestley

The guitarist explains how he selected the albums he can't live without: "I want to preface this by saying there are so many more albums, but I picked five that have kind of orbited everything I've loved musically and creatively for so long that I'd be remiss if I didn't start with these!"

1. *Undercurrent* (1962) by Jim Hall and Bill Evans

"*Undercurrent* is a duo record with Jim and Bill and was probably the most played record in our household when I was starting out as a guitar player at eight or nine years old. The record is just completely sublime. They're playing originals, some standards, and it's not a terribly long record. But one of the many stunning attributes of *Undercurrent* is really the interaction. It feels like two people having a conversation with incredible ability and facility but using those skills towards a musical goal. The music is always front and centre. And the emotional impact is always front and centre. The sound of it is just so satisfying. It's a record of great mystery and just one of my absolute favourites of all time."

2. *Aretha Now* (1968) by Aretha Franklin

"Truly any Aretha Franklin record could be on this list. You couldn't go wrong. This one in particular has her version of 'You Send Me', which is very iconic and is kind of the blueprint for everything that I crave rhythmically and from a groove perspective, and the way an ensemble plays a time and supports a melodic voice. 'You Send Me' is a masterclass in that, and it's also not a terribly long song. None of the songs are, but it seems as though they get to the heart of the matter instantly, like the piano intro that is just so to the point, so inviting, so clear. And then as the track unfolds, you don't think it can get better and it does! That's how that song feels. But that's how every track on the record feels. 'You Send Me' just happens to be the song that got me into the album."

3. *Rubinstein Plays Chopin* (1960s) by Arthur Rubinstein

"For me, Arthur Rubinstein is the greatest interpreter of music, regardless of who the composer is. Well, I'll put it this way – it's as though he wrote the music. Rubinstein plays as an improviser would, but he does it with materials from other composers. He also manages to strike that beautiful balance of being completely mesmerising as a player, while simultaneously kind of disappearing so that all you hear is the music come forth. That's an incredible magic trick. This is soul music. This is music that has healed me at many junctures in my life, and I'm so grateful for it."

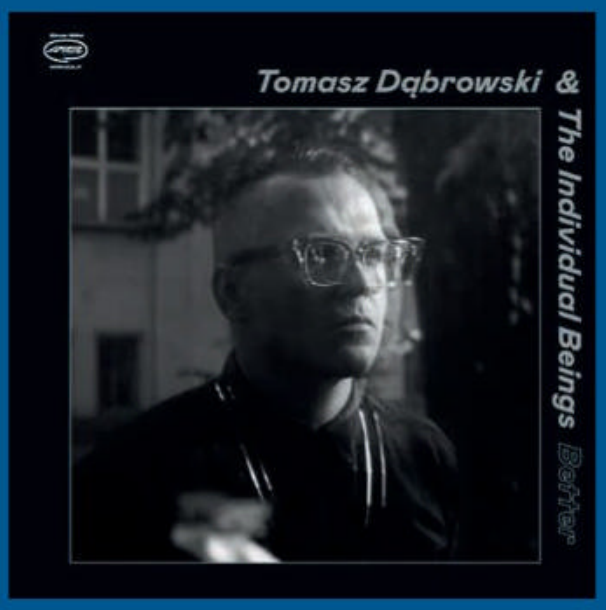
4. *My Favorite Things* (1961) by John Coltrane

"There's not much that I can say about this record that I'm sure hasn't already been said. Personally, this is a record that I've played along with so much as a student of music. And it's not only Coltrane obviously, but it's the whole band. It's the ensemble and the transcendence of the message. The music drops you into a different world that sustains and grows in intensity. And that is cathartic, liberating and complex and truly a reflection of the human condition. I am forever grateful for this album. It has and continues to be a huge teaching tool for me."

5. *The Shape of Jazz To Come* (1959) by Ornette Coleman

"*The Shape of Jazz To Come* is so iconic for many reasons. But I think for me, the reason I can't live without it is partially just the mystery of it. How are they playing together this way? How is the sound congealing in this way? How are the emotional themes? They sew together pieces of composed material with complete improvisational sections in such a way that you hear no division, just pure expression and deep, deep listening on the part of the players. It's so humbling. It's so deeply amazing. So this record, like all of these five picks, represent what I want to do. They make me want to be a better musician and a better person. It's with great humility that I share these albums with you."

Julian Lage headlines the Barbican, London on 21 April, and his latest album, *Speak to Me*, is out now on Blue Note



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"Alongside Kendrick Scott and Alexander Claffy, Rasmus Sørensen stakes his claim as one-to-watch from this new generation of pianists"

LP / CD / Digital — Release April 26th, 2024

ARILD ANDERSEN / DANIEL SOMMER / ROB LUFT: "AS TIME PASSES"
"A superb, thoroughly compelling release of considerable musical and emotional range" (Michael Tucker, Jazz Journal)

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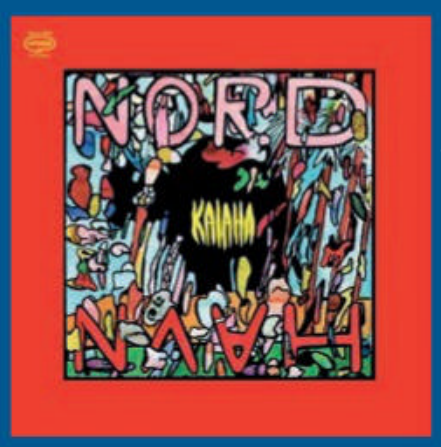
LIS WESSBERG: "TWAIN WALKING"
Diving deep into the personal exploration of her creative roots, the latest release from Danish trombonist Lis Wessberg mixes the warm vitality of New Orleans jazz with the reflective hum of the ECM sound, and the boundary-pushing songwriting of Radiohead.

LP / CD / Digital

JACOB ANDERSKOV: "I SANG"
"a captivating conversation with Denmark's Højskolesangbogen, a cherished late 19th-century compilation of singalongs, folk songs, and hymns deeply intertwined with the essence of Danish cultural identity" - Jazziz (USA)

LP / CD / Digital

DAVID MIILMANN GROUP: "WHAT'S LEFT"
With Miilmann's blues-infused slide guitar playing in the spotlight, 'What's Left' is a fierce statement of truth and individuality by a young band brought together by collective hardship.



LP / CD / Digital

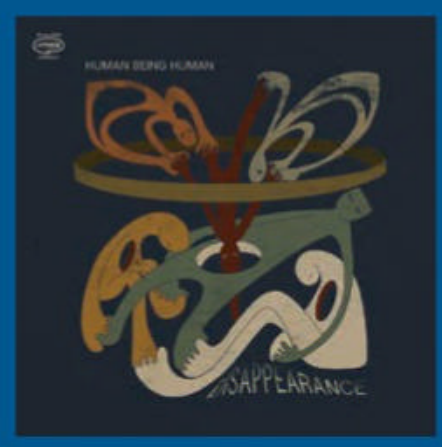
KALAHA: "NORD HAVN"
"Their seventh hallucinatory trip is a riveting adventure, a melting pot of exploration that touches on elements of both tribal and tropical – all tied together by a compelling sense of funky rhythm and dance!" - Presto Music

LP / CD / Digital

ANDREAS TOFTEMARK QUARTET FEATURING GERARD PRESENCER: "LA GARE"
With special guest Gerard Presencer on trumpet, Toftemark's quartet sound oozes 60's hard bop and contemporary Danish jazz.

LP / CD / Digital

JEPPE ZACHO: "INTRODUCING"
"a crisp, clean, raw energy that harks back to some of the greats from the classic Blue Note era of the 1960's" - UK Vibe



LP / CD / Digital

HUMAN BEING HUMAN: "DISAPPEARANCE"
The brainchild of Torben Bjørnskov, Human Being Human brings together the bassist with Esben Tjalve (piano) and Frederik Bülow (drums) for a trio sound that is playful, contemplative and dynamic.

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Jazz's crown jewels

The most important jazz collection in the UK, which belonged to the late **Alan Bates**, is about to come up for sale. **Kevin Whitlock** does some crate digging...

It's a cold, dismal and rainy day in February. As I trudge from the railway station towards my destination, I have little idea just how interesting this day is about to get. Sheela Berry (pictured right, with a Blue Note classic) answers the door of the large, rambling house and I enter. As she makes me a welcome cup of tea in the kitchen, she explains this is where she grew up, and where her widowed mother still lives. In order that her mum can downsize to somewhere a little smaller, Sheela has to sell her late father's record collection.

However, this is no ordinary collection – for starters, it's vast (we'll come to that in a moment); and is a huge treasure trove, whose historical value is incalculable. This is because Sheela's dad was Alan Bates (1925-2023), a music producer, label boss, facilitator, impresario and all-round titanic figure in British jazz since the 1950s; he co-founded the importer Interdisc, later set up the Black Lion and Freedom labels, and revived Nat Hentoff's Candid imprint in the UK, reissuing scores of classics and launching the careers of Stacey Kent and Jamie Cullum.

And the entire collection is going up for sale.

"Dad spent his whole time, every waking minute, listening to, recording or talking about music," explains Sheela. "When I was growing up, he was constantly playing his jazz records. This is all his lifetime's work, right here."

Looking over the house (the collection is stored on different floors), Alan's was obviously a productive life. There are an estimated 18,000 vinyl LPs covering all styles and eras of jazz; tens of thousands of CDs; not to mention hundreds of 78s, plus tapes, books, memorabilia and other oddities. Sheela has enlisted the help of a small army of friends to help her catalogue it all, but they're nowhere near finished yet! (As a side note, Alan Bates was also a huge railway buff and his collection of rail books and model trains is also quite something to behold; the collector's instinct was obviously strong with him!)

As I rummage around, it becomes clear that this might be the largest and most important jazz collection ever to come up for sale here in the UK, dwarfing even that of the late Tony Hall. It's not just the pristine Blue Note, Riverside, Prestige, Mosaic and Decca *et al* LPs (most of them in complete runs); it's the other stuff – reel-to-reel master tapes by the likes of Duke Ellington, John Coltrane, Charles Tolliver, Dexter Gordon, Humphrey Lyttelton and Chris Barber; contracts, including one signed by Thelonious Monk ("there are others, somewhere," Sheela assures me); a huge periodicals archive, including a complete set of *Swing Journal* from Japan and a 1934-2022 run of *DownBeat*s; DAT masters; a nice collection of wartime US Armed Forces Radio Service 16-inch transcription discs (used to broadcast live concerts in the 1940s, and including gigs by Duke and Satchmo); letters, photos, memorabilia; old audio equipment; and a vast library of jazz books – biographies, discographies, reference tomes... you name it, it's here. As well as jazz, there are also folk, blues and African LPs, and even a few mega-collectable rock records by the likes of The Beatles, Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix.

Historically, the most valuable part of the collection is undoubtedly that stash of hundreds of master tapes, featuring studio and live recordings of the most important names in jazz. But, as Sheela points out, cataloguing and then working out who owns the rights to this material is going to take years, not to mention specialist knowledge; but these tapes cannot end up in landfill and must, surely, be of interest to reissue labels... so come on chaps!

What does Sheela want to do with this incredible collection?

"As it was my father's life's work, I would ideally like to keep it together. But I appreciate that might not be possible. I have had a couple of serious enquiries from wealthy individuals looking to buy a complete collection of this sort, which I am pursuing. It won't be practical to sell individually via Discogs or eBay, there just isn't the time; but if we can't find a single buyer then we'll consider offers for blocks of the collection, or maybe hand it over to an auction house to handle it all."

She's continuing to take advice, and hopes to get the media (newspapers, radio and TV, London-based especially) interested in the story. In addition she is thinking about hosting a discreet 'open house night' so that serious buyers can have a look around the collection for themselves. Whatever happens, we'll be following the story and letting you know where this lot ends up.

But anyway, you'll have to excuse me now, I've got to pop to the shops to buy that EuroMillions lottery ticket... one can but dream!

If you're *seriously* interested in buying all or part of the collection, get in touch with me at: kevin@jazzwise.com – and I'll pass your enquiries on to Sheela.

barbican.org.uk

barbican

Jazz at the Barbican

Tue 2 Apr
The James Taylor Quartet

Sun 21 Apr
Julian Lage

Thu 9 May
SHABAKA

Thu 23 May
Chris Botti

Fri 28 Jun
Arthur Verocai with Nu Civilisation Orchestra

Thu 4 Jul
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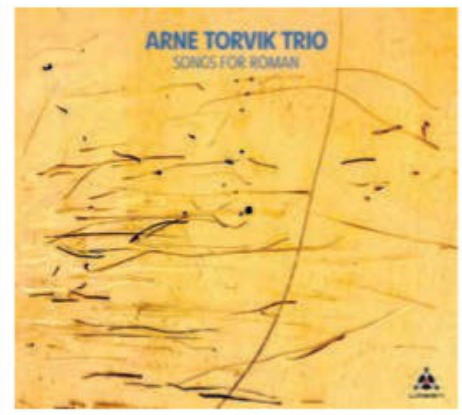
LOSEN

ARNE TORVIK TRIO
SONGS FOR ROMAN

LOS 286-2

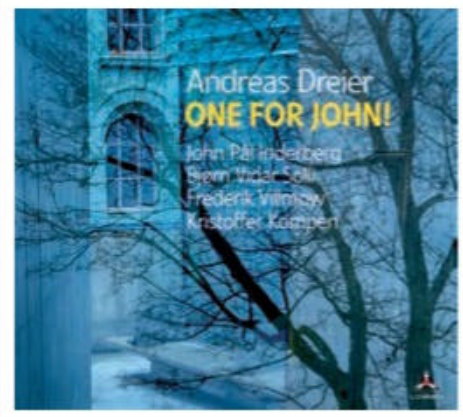


Arne Torvik *piano*
Bjørnar Kaldefoss Tveite *double bass*
Øystein Aarnes Vik *drums*

Deeply emotional and lyrical music from a trio that has many followers around the world. It's the emotionally charged melodic approach and nuanced interplay within a mainstream scope that are reflected and expanded upon by Arne Torvik and his trio. This album is not just easy on the ear but good for the soul.

ANDREAS DREIER
ONE FOR JOHN!

LOS 287-2

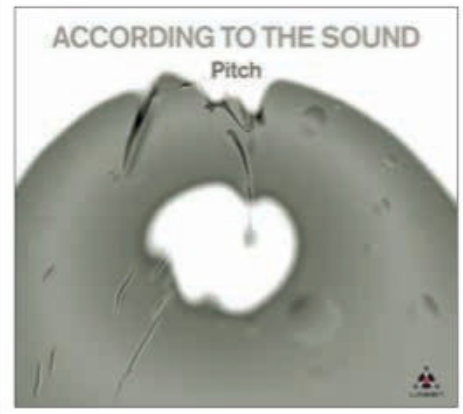


Andreas Dreier *double bass*
John Pål Inderberg *baritone saxophone*
Bjørn Vidar Solli *guitar*
Frederik Villmow *drums, percussion*
Kristoffer Kompen *trombone (on two tracks)*

A refined album of modern jazz from Andreas Dreier Quartet featuring renowned baritone saxophonist John Pål Inderberg, whose contribution weaves a magical spell over the leader's compositions. The inspiration behind this album comes from the work of piano legend Ahmad Jamal, whose composition 'Ahmad's Waltz' is the opening track.

ACCORDING TO THE SOUND
PITCH

LOS 290-2



Adam Parry-Davies *piano*
Patrick Case *guitar, synth, programming*

Third release from pianist Adam Parry-Davies and guitarist Patrick Case, the British duo behind the conceptual band, According To The Sound. With amazing guest musicians, including trumpeter Mike Rodriguez, and saxophonist James Carter, this is a heady mix of jazz and chill-out grooves. The overall mood is consolatory and has a story telling quality that could be imagined as a movie soundtrack.

OLGA KONKOVA
THE PIANIST'S GARDEN

LOS 291-2

Olga Konkova *piano, Fender Rhodes*
Mark Heinecke *woodwinds*
Frederik Villmow *drums, percussion*

Exquisite production inspired by early Lutheran chorale music and other composed music, infused with spontaneous improvisations.
As Olga Konkova says: "This is not a traditional piano trio, but a beautiful experiment where both woodwinds and drums provide the accompaniment to my piano."

www.LOSENRECORDS.no

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Charting the Jazz Message/April 2024

Shabaka Hutchings

Photo by Atibaphoto

The *Jazzwise* Chart

What's currently spinning on the Jazzwise team's stereos...

1 Shabaka Hutchings Perceive its Beaty, Acknowledge its Grace *Impulse!*
2 Tim Garland Lighthouse Trio and Orchestra Moment of Departure *Ubuntu Music*
3 Dave Douglas with James Brandon Lewis GIFTS *Greenleaf Music*
4 Alice Coltrane The Carnegie Hall Concert *Impulse!*
5 Lizz Wright Shadow *Blues and Greens*
6 Bill Laurance Bloom *ACT Music*
7 Joel Ross nublues *Blue Note*
8 Michael Brecker Pilgrimage *Heads Up*
9 Ill Considered Precipice *New Soil*
10 Gilad Hekselman Live at The Village Vanguard *La Reserve*

SOUND RECORDS

Jazz gems from the Stroud vinyl emporium www.facebook.com/soundstroud

1 Lee Morgan Search For The New Land *Blue Note*
2 Joe Henderson Mode For Joe *Blue Note*
3 Yusef Lateef Eastern Sounds *Prestige*
4 O'Donel Levy Simba *Mr Bongo*
5 Piero Umiliani Today's Sound *Blind Faith*
6 Yussef Dayes Live From Malibu *Brownswood*
7 Steps Ahead Steps Ahead *Elektra*
8 Donald Byrd A New Perspective *Blue Note*
9 Takuya Kuroda Rising Son *First World*
10 Sven Wunder Late Again *Piano Piano*

SOMETHIN' ELSE

Jez Nelson Sundays at 10pm on Jazz FM

1 Bill Frisell Orchestras *Blue Note*
2 Cassie Kinoshi's Seed. gratitude *International Anthem*
3 Dave Douglas with James Brandon Lewis Gifts *Greenleaf*
4 Empirical Wonder is the Beginning *Whirlwind Recordings*
5 Fire! Testament Rune *Grammofon*
6 Isaiah Collier & The Chosen Few The Almighty *Division 81*
7 Jamie Baum Septet What Times Are These *Sunnyside*
8 Paula Rae Gibson & Matthew Bourne Loving In Real Time *33 Xtreme*
9 Shabaka Hutchings Perceive its Beauty, Acknowledge its Grace *Impulse!*
10 Pando Pando Pando Pando *Not Applicable*

EUROPEAN JAZZ MEDIA

Selected by Europe's leading jazz media

1 Julian Lage Speak To Me *Blue Note*
2 Konstantin Kolesnichenko Good Things: A Tribute To George Smith *Self-release*
3 Atom String Quartet Universum *Warner Classics*
4 Scratching Fork II Fundacja *Słuchaj*
5 Nils Økland Band Gjenskinn *Hubro*
6 Felix Zurstrassen Nova Elusive *Igloo*
7 Nikki Iles & the NDR Big Band Face To Face *Edition*
8 Daniel Herskedal A Single Sunbeam *Edition*
9 Old Mountain Another State Of Rhythm *Clean Feed*
10 Philipp Rüttgers Trio Etudes of Shapes and Forms *Zennez*

UNION MUSIC

Pre-loved and new jazz gems from the Lewes vinyl lovers

1 Teodross Avery After The Rain *Tompkins Square*
2 Hampton Hawes Trio *Contemporary*
3 Barney Wilen Moshi *Saravah*
4 Lee Morgan Search For New Land *Blue Note*
5 Mel Brown Chicken Fat *Verve*
6 Erroll Garner Complete Concert By The Sea *Columbia*
7 Johnny Hodges Not So Dukish *Verve*
8 Blossom Dearie Soon It's Gonna Rain *Fontana*
9 Roy Brooks Understanding *Reel Real*
10 Bob Cooper Group Activity *Affinity*

GUEST CHART: LIZZ WRIGHT

Enlightening listening from Lizz's decks

1 Mereba The Jungle is the Way Out *Interscope Records*
2 Cleo Sol Rose in the Dark *Forever Living Originals*
3 Keyon Harrold Foreverland *Concord*
4 Kaytranada 99.9% *XL Recordings*
5 Naomi Sharon Obsidian *OVO Sound*
6 Danielle Ponder Some Of Us Are Brave *FUTURE CLASSIC*
7 Black Pumas Black Pumas *PIAS Group*
8 Novo Amor Antarctican Dream Machine *All Points*
9 Alex Isley Marigold *Self-release*
10 Lila Ike The Experience *In.Digg.Nation Collective/Six Course Music/RCA*

PRESTO MUSIC

The store and streaming service that gets jazz to your door... www.prestomusic.com/jazz

1 Mary Halvorson Cloudward *Nonesuch*
2 Theo May's Odd Unit Alive in the Forest of Odd *Discus*
3 Melissa Aldana Echoes of the Inner Prophet *Blue Note*
4 Fourplay Between The Sheets *Evo Sound*
5 Germana Stella La Sorsa Primary Colours *33 Jazz*
6 Austin Peralta Endless Planets *Brainfeeder*
7 Liv Andrea Hauge Trio Ville Blomster *Hubro*
8 Jahari Massamba Unit YHWH is LOVE *Law of Rhythm*
9 Dayna Stephens Closer Than We Think *Cellar Live*
10 Ill Considered Precipice *New Soil*

THE BLUEPRINT

Chris Philips' maraud through new jazz heat grooves and free sounds on Jazz FM

1 Alice Coltrane The Carnegie Hall Concert *Impulse!*
2 The Messthetics And James Brandon Lewis The Messthetics And James Brandon Lewis *Impulse!*
3 Ill Considered Precipice *New Soil*
4 Shabaka Hutchings Perceive its Beauty, Acknowledge its Grace *Impulse!*
5 Tom Ollendorff & Fabrice Tarel Quartet London Vibes Suite For Freedom *Tetrakord*
6 Ches Smith Laugh Ash *Pyroclastic*
7 Willie Morris Attentive Listening *Posi-Tone*
8 Florian Arbenz Conversation 11/12: ON! *Hammer*
9 Trio HLK Anthropometricks *Ubuntu Music*
10 Julian Costello Quartet And All The Birds Were Set Free *33Jazz*

JAZZ FM

Essential sounds from Jazz FM on DAB www.jazzfm.com

1 Kamasi Washington Fearless Movement *Young*
2 Norah Jones Visions *Blue Note*
3 Shabaka Hutchings Perceive its Beauty, Acknowledge its Grace *Impulse!*
4 Monty Alexander D Day *PeeWee*
5 Dana Masters Real Good Mood *Camden Studio Records*
6 Blue Lab Beats Blue Eclipse *Decca*
7 Nubiyan Twist Find Your Flame *K7!*
8 Jacob Collier Djesse Vol 4 *Decca*
9 Dee C Lee Just Something *Acid Jazz*
10 Alina Bzhezhinska Altera Vita *BBE Music*

THE CUTTING EDGE

Mike Chadwick selects hot new releases www.soulandjazz.com

1 Potter/Mehldau/Patitucci/Blade Eagle's Point *Edition*
2 Bill Laurance Hope EP *Flint Music*
3 Lucien Johnson Ancient Relics *Deluge*
4 One For All featuring George Coleman Big George *Smoke Sessions*
5 Tonbruket Light Wood, Dark Strings *Smuggler Music*
6 Fergus McCreadie Stream *Edition*
7 Gilad Hekselman Live at The Village Vanguard *La Reserve*
8 Martin Sjosted & Stockholm Jazz Orchestra Horizon *Ubuntu Music*
9 Remy Le Bouef's Assembly of Shadows Heartland Radio *SoundSpore*
10 Last Ark Out Lift *lastarkout.com*

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Love Supreme Jazz Festival

Leeds Jazz Festival

UK & EUROPE JAZZ FESTIVAL GUIDE 2024

Whether you're planning a jazz weekend or a long break, **Tim Dickeson**'s guide through the myriad of festivals across the UK and the continent is a must-read. Jazz travel, whether at home or abroad, is a wonderful way to see new places and hear fantastic music. If you love the beach, the mountains, or city breaks... they're all here. Many festivals, such as Love Supreme and Cheltenham in the UK, Waidhofen and Inntöne in Austria and the Time in Jazz Festival in Sardinia are family-friendly and so are the perfect way to introduce newbies to the joys of jazz. All details may be subject to change so always check carefully before booking. Have a great festival season!

Nantes Jazz Festival

MARCH

UK:

ABERDEEN JAZZ FESTIVAL, ABERDEEN: 14-24 MARCH

This year the Granite City offers 30 events with more than 100 artists. The diverse programme features Martin Taylor, Tommy Smith/Pete Johnstone, Sun Mi Hong, Michelle Wills, The Britta Virves Trio, corto.alto, Ali Afleck and the Aberdeen Jazz Orchestra performing Richard Michael's *Doric* suite.
www.aberdeenjazzfestival.com

STEINWAY 2-PIANO FESTIVAL, PIZZA EXPRESS SOHO, LONDON: 21-27 MARCH

The extremely popular 2-Piano festival this year features among others: Carsten Dahl & Nikolaj Hess, Bill Sharpe & Don Grusin, Wendy Kirkland & Charu Suri, Ian Shaw & James Pearson and Sullivan Fortner & Sean Mason.
www.pizzaexpresslive.com

EUROPE:

BANLIEUES BLEUES, PARIS: 8 MARCH-5 APRIL

This festival in the suburbs of Paris offers a mix of cutting-edge jazz and world music. Pedro Soler & Gasper Claus, Hollie Cook, Vieux Farke Touré, Julien Desprez, Boolvar & Black Lagoon feature this year.
www.banlieuesbleues.org

JAZZFESTBRNO, BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC: UNTIL 14 MAY

This year the festival offers concerts spread out over a three-month period featuring: Lakecia Benjamin, Trio Grande, Samara Joy, Gretchen Parlato/Lionel Loueke, Emmet Cohen, Snarky Puppy and others. **www.jazzfestbrno.cz**

VOSSA JAZZ, VOSS, NORWAY: 22-24 MARCH

The festival located in the heart of Norway's fjord country offers 35 shows over the weekend. Marius Neset, Karin Krog, Hanna Paulsberg, Marilyn Mazur, William Parker & Murray/ Håker Flaten/Nilssen-Love all feature, plus many more. **www.vossajazz.no**

APRIL

EUROPE:

CULLY JAZZ, SWITZERLAND: 5-13 APRIL

Set on Lake Geneva's shores, this festival boasts a very impressive programme that includes Avishai Cohen (trumpet), Dave Holland, Kyle Eastwood, Monty Alexander, Portico Quartet, Lakecia Benjamin/Dee Dee Bridgewater/ Julie Campiche, Yaron Hermon, Elina Duni/ Rob Luft and Nubya Garcia; in addition there is an impressive 'off-fest' programme.
www.cullyjazz.ch

JAZZAHEAD!, BREMEN, GERMANY: 11-13 APRIL

The jazz industry place to be to discover new and upcoming artists. With dozens of showcases and an exhibition hall brimming with record labels and promoters. Waving the UK flag this year are Sultan Stevenson, Matt Carmichael and Mama Terra. The featured country is the Netherlands - look out for the superb Ben van Gelder & Reinier Bass duo.
www.jazzahead.de

APRIL JAZZ, TAPIOLA ESPOO, FINLAND: 19-27 APRIL

A great festival just outside the Finnish capital with a few concerts this year in Helsinki itself. The impressive 2024 programme includes Christian McBride, James Brandon Lewis, Linda May Han Oh, Peter Evans, Alex Hawkins, Anton Eger/Morten Schantz, Immanuel Wilkins with the Espoo Big Band and many others. **www.apriljazz.fi**

JAZZFEST BONN, GERMANY: 19 APRIL- 1 MAY

A diverse mix of styles at the festival this year: Helge Lien, Viktoria Tolstoy, Linda May Han Oh, Richard Galliano, Julia Hülsmann, Lars Danielsson, Harold López-Nussa, Iiro Rantala plus many more. **www.jazzfest-bonn.de**

JAZZKAAR, TALLINN, ESTONIA: 21 APRIL – 28 APRIL

This year's artists include; Snarky Puppy, Christian McBride, Joep Beving, MonoNeon and many more. Tallinn is a fascinating, historic and beautiful city which is well worth a visit, especially during Spring festival time. **www.jazzkaar.ee**

JAZZFEST GRONAU, GERMANY: 30 APRIL-5 MAY

An extravaganza with concerts and jazz themed events. Enjoy 'Jazz & Dine' shows at restaurants across the city, an outdoor swimming pool jazz concert, the K&K Music night with various stages and many bands; plus the weekend Jazz in the City event on multiple stages. **www.jazzfest.de**

MAY

UK:

THE RIBBLE VALLEY JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL, CLITHEROE: 3-6 MAY

A great weekend of music here over the Bank Holiday, featuring five headline acts and 40 free jazz gigs. Corto.alto, Nikki Illes, Emma Johnson and Unfurl are announced so far. **www.rvjazzfestival.co.uk**

CHELTENHAM INT'L JAZZ FESTIVAL, CHELTENHAM, GLOS: 1-6 MAY

Cheltenham always delivers a diverse mix of top names and tons of choice. With various venues across the town, including the Parabola for hardened jazz fans, and the festival village with its Big Top, Jazz Arena and foods stalls, there's something for everyone (see Page 4 for details). **www.cheltenhamfestivals.com**

MANCHESTER JAZZ FESTIVAL, MANCHESTER: 17-26 MAY

A great line-up for this year's festival – John Surman, Courtney Pine, Laura Jurd, Nikki Illes Jazz Orchestra, Tim Garland, Julian Joseph, Trish Clowes and many more will appear at the Band on the Wall and Matt & Phreds among other top venues in the city. **www.manchesterjazz.com**

JAZZ STROUD FESTIVAL, STROUD, GLOS: 23-26 MAY

Jazz Stroud is a fun weekend of alternative jazz sounds around this buzzing arts-loving Cotswold town. The full 2024 programme is out in April, with first names including a Tomorrrow's Warriors Takeover on the opening night plus new band un.procedure featuring Cassie Kinoshi. **www.jazzstroud.org**

SIDMOUTH INTERNATIONAL JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL, SIDMOUTH, DEVON: 23-27 MAY

This year's programme includes three days of live music performances on the dedicated outdoor performance stage featuring among others; Tony Hadley, Ian Shaw, Ruby Turner, Roberto Fonseca, Roachford, Elles Bailey plus Mica Miller are booked and there's a free educational programme of workshops, masterclasses and performances. In addition there are free live music events at many local venues. **www.sidmouthjazz.com**

LEEDS JAZZ FESTIVAL, LEEDS: 23-28 MAY

Courtney Pine, Alan Barnes, Fergus McCreadie, Nubiyan Twist, Phil Minton and a Tribute to Hermeto Pascoal by the Universal Musical Ensemble plus others are already booked for 2024. With outdoor and indoor venues with events across the city, there is a lot to see. **www.jazzleedsfestival.co.uk**

CROSS THE TRACKS JAZZ, FUNK & BLUES FESTIVAL, BROCKWELL PARK, LONDON: 26 MAY

A one-day festival with top names in South London's Brockwell Park. Erykah Badu, Badbadnotgood, corto.alto, En Vogue, Gilles Peterson, Emma-Jean Thackray and many more shows, DJ Sets and performances have been lined up. **www.xthetracks.com**

EUROPE:

JAZZ SOUS LES POMMIERS, COUTANCES, FRANCE: 4 - 11 MAY

The 'Jazz under the Apple Trees' festival offers a brilliant, relaxing time in rural France, an easy Ferry crossing away by car. This year Brad Mehldau, Bill Frisell, Harold López-Nussa, Poetic Ways, GoGo Penguin and Kareen Guiock-Thurman are booked already. **www.jazzsouslespommiers.com**

LIKE A JAZZ MACHINE FESTIVAL, DUDELANGE, LUXEMBOURG: 8-12 MAY

An easy drive or short flight from the UK brings you to this great festival in Luxembourg. Curtis Stigers, Giovanni Guidi, Sun-Mi Hong, Claire Parsons, Maxime Bender, Seb Rochford, Airelle Besson and the Nova Quartet are among the artists playing this year. **www.jazzmachine.lu**

MOERS JAZZ FESTIVAL, MOERS, GERMANY: 7-20 MAY

An interesting festival featuring a wide spectrum of improvised music. So far announced are Ruth Goller's Skylla and Jambinai and the improviser in residence will be the Italian saxophonist Virginia Genta. **www.moers-festival.de**

TRONDHEIM JAZZ FESTIVAL, TRONDHEIM, NORWAY: 10-19 MAY

A great festival set around the waterfront of this picturesque city. Playing this year are; Kyle Eastwood Symphonic, Judith Hill, Eyolf Dale, Jazzmeia Horn, Anthony Strong, Judy Dahle Aagård and many others. **www.jazzfest.no**

JAZZ À SAINT GERMAIN-DES-PRÉS, PARIS, FRANCE: 13-21 MAY

A fabulous festival in the centre of Paris with top name artists - the event boasts unique concerts in exceptional venues, some of which are free to enter. Last year featured Paolo Fresu, Yaron Herman, Richard Galliano, Erik Truffaz, so expect similar quality this time round. **www.festivaljazzsaintgermainparis.com**

NATTJAZZ, BERGEN, NORWAY: 26 MAY- 3 JUNE

2024's Nattjazz features: Nils Petter Molvær, Bill Frisell, Atari, Next Planet, Dina Ögon, Jacob Young, Paal Nilsson-Love's Circus plus many others in picturesque Bergen, West Norway. **www.nattjazz.no**

JUNE

UK:

LICHFIELD JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL, LICHFIELD, STAFFS: 4-11 JUNE

Based at the Guildhall and the Cathedral Hotel, this festival features top acts from across the UK - Dennis Rollins plays with the Nick Dewhurst Band, Salsa from Del Camino, The Midland Youth Jazz Orchestra, King Pleasure & the Biscuit Boys, Emma Johnson, Rosie Tee, Emily Alice and Amelia Harrison plus others. **www.lichfieldarts.org.uk**

AMSER JAZZ TIME FESTIVAL, RWCMD, CARDIFF: 6-8 JUNE

Lined up for 2024: Binker Golding, Claire Martin and Tomos Williams' Cwmwl Tystion III/Empathy. Free concerts and student performances take place across the weekend at the brilliantly-designed Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff. **www.rwcmd.ac.uk/whatson**

GLASGOW JAZZ FESTIVAL, GLASGOW: 14-18 JUNE

This festival features performances from musical talent across a spectrum of genres including jazz, blues, soul, funk, R&B, electro and world music in venues across the city. **www.jazzfest.co.uk**

Inntone

Ystad

Manchester

UPTON JAZZ FESTIVAL, UPTON, WORCS: 24-25 JUNE

This jazz festival fills the town with music: the Memorial Hall, pubs and the Baptist Church all host concerts. Alan Barnes, John Hallam, Tom Kincaid, The Amy Roberts Quintet, Alex Clarke are lined up, plus there are free fringe events at the Swan Hotel. **www.uptonjazz.co.uk**

EUROPE:

ELBJAZZ, HAMBURG, GERMANY: 7-8 JUNE

An eclectic festival in the iconic city of Hamburg utilising the wonderful Elbphilharmonie venue among others - this year's event features Shalosh, Alice Phoebe Lou, Martin Kohlstedt, Ida Sand, Nubian Twist, Belle & Sebastian, Ed Motta and more; a full weekend of music!
www.elbejazz.de

JAZZ BALTICA, NIENDORF, SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, GERMANY: 27-30 JUNE

Sun, sea, beach and jazz... what a great combination! All based at the Maritim hotel in Niendorf. Nils Landgren, Monty Alexander, Gwilym Simcock, Sarah Chaksad, Wolfgang Waffner, Emma Rawicz have already been confirmed. **www.jazz-baltica.com**

JAZZ À VIENNE, VIENNE, FRANCE: 27 JUNE-12 JULY

This festival covers the town and runs from 12 noon till 3am every day and most of it is free - only the Antique Roman theatre shows are ticketed. Announced so far: Ibrahim Maalouf, Lizz Wright, Rhoda Scott, Jools Holland, Caravan Palace, Thomas de Pourquery and Mulatu Astatke. **www.jazzavienne.com**

43RD INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL, WAIDHOFEN, AUSTRIA: 28-30 JUNE

A very family-friendly outdoor festival not far from Vienna, featuring mostly European artists. With inexpensive tickets which include free camping and river swimming, why not make a holiday of it? **www.folkclub.at**

SUDTIROL JAZZFESTIVAL ALTOADIGE, BOLZANO, ITALY: 28 JUNE-7 JULY

A great festival in the classy city of Bolzano. The ancient Dolomites dominate the area and the festival focuses on the young European scene. Concerts are held across the area with a main 'base camp' venue in Bolzano itself. The early names booked include: Mette Rasmussen's Ox, Maria Faust, Sofia Jernberg, Nancelot and Sigurdur Rägnavaldsson's Lûna.
www.suedtiroljazzfestival.com

JULY

UK:

BUXTON FESTIVAL JAZZ WEEKEND, BUXTON, DERBYSHIRE: 4-8 JULY

A very classy weekend of music in the Peak District. Between having your spa and cream tea, there is music from Ian Shaw, Deschanel Gordon, Zoe Rahman, Alan Barnes, Threeway with John Etheridge, Emily Brown and many others. **www.buxtonoperahouse.org.uk**

LOVE SUPREME JAZZ FESTIVAL, GLYNDE, EAST SUSSEX: 5-7 JULY

The UK's biggest outdoor jazz, funk and soul festival. Billy Cobham, Hiromi, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Christian McBride, Sergio Mendez, Joss Stone, Chaka Khan, Fergus McCreadie, Kool & the Gang and many more have already been booked to appear at Glynde Place that's set in the beautiful Sussex Downs.
www.lovesupremefestival.com

WIGAN INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL, WIGAN: 11-14 JULY

A great festival held at the Village on the Green in Aspull – groups booked so far include Ben Holder Quartet, Jeff Hooper Trio and as always, the excellent Wigan Youth Jazz Orchestra.
www.wiganjazzfest.co.uk

BURTON AGNES JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL, BURTON AGNES, NR BRIDLINGTON: 12-14 JULY

The festival is uniquely set in one of England's finest homes, Burton Agnes Hall. A superb line-up of bands provides a weekend of music from a main stage on a manicured lawn. On-site weekend camping is available – programme available April.
www.burtonagnes.com

SWANAGE JAZZ FESTIVAL, SWANAGE, DORSET: 12-14 JULY

Concerts at Sandpit Field overlooking the sea and the Mowlem Theatre plus other venues around the town. So far announced: Alyn Shipton, Chris Hodgkins, The Dart Valley Stompers and the great New Orleans jazz Parade.
www.swanagejazzfestival.co.uk

EDINBURGH JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL, EDINBURGH: 14-23 JULY

The festival features music and associated events across the city. The Jools Holland Jazz Orchestra are due on the opening night and the rest of the programme is announced soon.
www.edinburghjazzfestival.com

BIRMINGHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL, BIRMINGHAM: 19-28 JULY

For its 40th anniversary, BJF will feature over 200 performances of which 90 per cent are free entry. Already on the bill: Alan Barnes, Art Themen, Digby Fairweather, Simon Spillett, Gianni Tbay, Ben Toury, Dave Green and Florence Joelle, with many more to come. There will also be workshops for ukulele playing and jive dancing.
www.birminghamjazz.co.uk

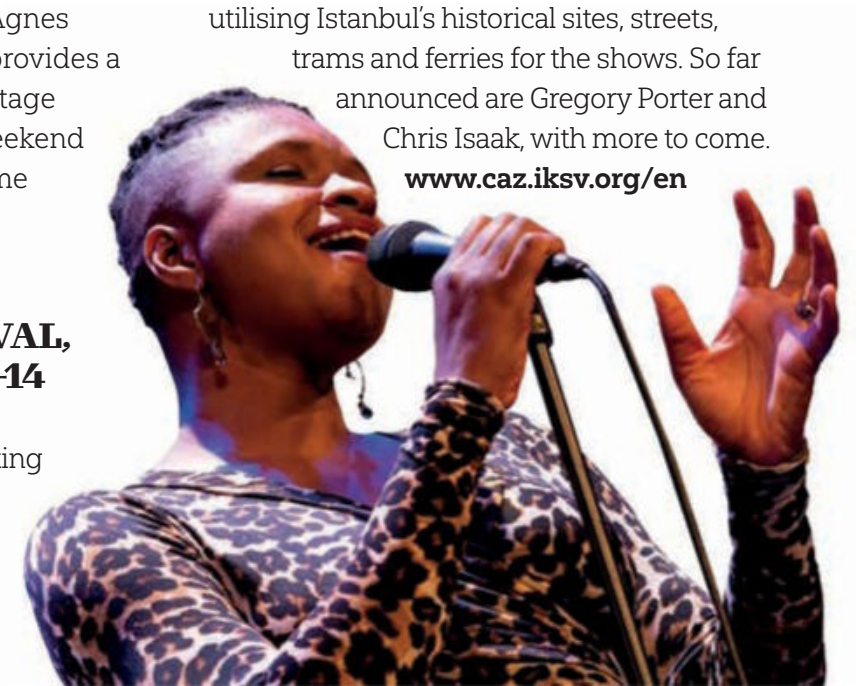
EUROPE:

KONGSBERG JAZZ FESTIVAL, NORWAY: 3-6 JULY

Celebrating 60 years in 2024, the festival has a great reputation and features a stellar line- up: Cécile McLorin Salvant, Joshua Redman, the Scofield/Holland duo, Knower, Elephant9, Gard Nilssen's Acoustic Unity, Eberson, Horta, Per Zanussi and many more.
www.kongsberg-jazzfestival.no

ISTANBUL JAZZ FESTIVAL, TURKEY: 3-18 JULY

The festival offers the opportunity to explore this historic city straddling Europe and Asia. Reaching beyond traditional concert halls, utilising Istanbul's historical sites, streets, trams and ferries for the shows. So far announced are Gregory Porter and Chris Isaak, with more to come.
www.caz.iksv.org/en



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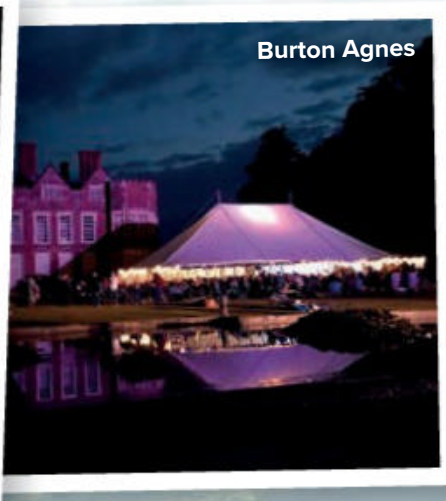

Burton Agnes

JAZZX, TIMIŞOARA, ROMANIA: 5-7 JULY

A beautiful city and a great vibe at this festival in a grand square. GoGo Penguin, Roberto Fonseca, Jordan Rakei, MonoNeon and Jazz Bois are the early names confirmed. It's cheap to get to and cheap to stay, plus the concerts are free. **www.plai.ro**

COPENHAGEN JAZZ FESTIVAL, DENMARK: 5-14 JULY

The festival takes over the city - parks, jazz clubs and temporary stages, theatres museums and of course in the city's largest and most beautiful concert halls. There are 1,200 events linked to the festival - the full programme will be available early April. **www.jazz.dk**

MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL, MONTREUX, SWITZERLAND: 5-20 JULY

2024 brings a massive re-design for this iconic festival. A new evening stage built on Lake Geneva to allow glorious views and sunsets, a return to the famous Casino, and loads of new free stages across the town. Pool parties feature and nightly gigs in Funky Claud's Bar plus a host of other new innovations. Let's hope there is some jazz to enjoy too! Full programme soon. **www.montreauxjazzfestival.com**

JAZZ À JUAN, JUAN-LES-PINS, FRANCE: 8-18 JULY

Festival locations don't come much better than this! With the stage just off the beach you bask in the setting sun as the biggest names in jazz play for you. So far announced are Marcus Miller, Joshua Redman, Youssou N'Dour and Kool & the Gang. The full programme is available in April. **www.jazzajuan.com**

GARANA JAZZ FESTIVAL, GARANA, ROMANIA 11-14 JULY

A great outdoor festival set in the natural hollow of a hillside called Wolf Meadow. Joe Lovano with Thomas Strønen, the Mats Eilertsen Trio, Airelle Besson Qt, Dixie Krauser Band and Jonathan Kreisberg are all confirmed, with more headliners to be announced. Book your accommodation early if you want to go! **www.garana-jazz.ro**

NORTH SEA JAZZ FESTIVAL, ROTTERDAM, HOLLAND: 12-14 JULY

As insane as ever, the festival days are rammed from morning till night with the best musicians in the world. Highlights from a massive programme include: Sting, Jamie Cullum, Raye, Joshua Redman, Chucho Valdes, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Candy Dulfer, Dave Douglas, Lizz Wright, the Scofield/Holland duo, Potter/Mehldau/Patitucci/Blake, Ibrahim Maalouf, Fire! Orchestra, Blinker Golding and many more. **www.northseajazz.com**

PORI JAZZ, PORI, FINLAND: 12-20 JULY

A massive outdoor festival with four stages and a beautiful scenic location. Top acts from across the world play here and it is very family-friendly. Programme available in April. **www.porijazz.fi**

UMBRIA JAZZ, PERUGIA, ITALY: 12-21 JULY

A fantastic festival in an historic and picturesque city. Concerts go from midday to 2am at locations all over Perugia and many are free. The festival features a wide mix of music - Raye, Hiromi, Chucho Valdés, Charles Lloyd, Kenny Barron, Paolo Fresu, Enrico Rava and Veronica Swift are among the early names. The full programme is available in April. **www.umbriajazz.com**

AARHUS INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL, AARHUS, DENMARK: 13-20 JULY

The Aarhus Jazz Orchestra launch this popular festival which pretty much takes over the entire Danish city of Aarhus while it's on – expect national and international stars in the programme, which will be published shortly. **www.jazzfest.dk**

NICE JAZZ FESTIVAL, NICE, FRANCE: 15-19 JULY

Place Massena just off the seafront gives the festival a super location with two stages and six concerts per evening. National & international stars feature. Programme due in April. **www.nicejazzfestival.fr**

MOLDE JAZZ FESTIVAL, MOLDE, NORWAY: 15-20 JULY

This festival on Norway's coast attracts national and international stars - Bill Frisell is artist in residence this year; plus, Daniel Herskedal & Marius Neset Duo, The Trondheim Voices, Bobo Stenson Trio, Anthony Braxton & Julie Bergan are booked so far. **www.moldejazz.no**

MARCIAC JAZZ FESTIVAL, MARCIAC, FRANCE: 18 JULY-4 AUGUST

Marciac in South-western France is a small village with a massive festival. Concerts are held in a big top and this year early names include New'Garo, Pink Martini and Vulfpeck with others to come - book accommodation ASAP! **www.jazzinmarciac.com**

INNTÖNE JAZZ FESTIVAL, DIERSBACH, AUSTRIA: 19-21 JULY

A wonderful and quirky event run by trombonist Paul Zauner and his family, set on his farm deep in the Austrian countryside. Most people camp but there are many places to stay around the area. There are several stages and music runs from midday to the early hours, with food and drink available on site. It's a unique experience and families are welcome. **www.inntoene.com**

DONOSTIA/SAN SEBASTIAN HEINEKEN JAZZALDIA, SAN SEBASTIAN, SPAIN: 23-28 JULY

One of the most expansive jazz festivals in Europe, set in a stunning seaside location on the Basque coast. Diana Krall, John Zorn, Gregory Porter, Potter/Mehldau/Patitucci/Blake, the Scofield/Holland duo and Youn Sun Nah are just the first names announced! **www.heinekenjazzaldia.com**

SLIGO JAZZ PROJECT, SLIGO, IRELAND: 23-28 JULY

The premier jazz education event in Europe. Elio Villafranca is senior artist in residence and Fergus McCreadie is young artist in residence. Among the other tutors/performers are: Sun-Mi Hong, Tom Ollendorff, Anita Wardel, Christine Tobin, Julian Siegel, Paul Clarvis and Gareth Lockrane. **www.sligojazz.ie**

YSTAD JAZZ FESTIVAL, YSTAD, SWEDEN: 31 JULY-4 AUGUST

A family friendly festival in the Swedish seaside town of Ystad. With a cosy theatre, church, hotel and squares the festival utilises all that is good about the town. Billy Cobham, Ballake Sissoko, Sarah McKenzie, Alba Armengou and Mezzoforte are already announced. This year, the last day of the festival is held at the magnificent Charlottenlund Manor and grounds which overlooks the Baltic Sea. **www.ystadjazz.se**

AUGUST

UK:

BRECON JAZZ FESTIVAL, BRECON: 4-18 AUGUST

The classic Brecon weekend is 9-12 August but there are several other excellent events around the festival this year including family jazz and dance on the first weekend and a film and jazz focus on the last. **www.breconjazz.org**

WE OUT HERE FESTIVAL, WIMBORNE ST GILES, DORSET: 15-18 AUGUST

Gilles Peterson's four-day outdoor festival features established and emerging artists, plus top class DJ Sets – the full programme is online and includes Dee Dee Bridgewater, Matthew Halsall, Rosie Turton, Floating Points, Ebo Taylor and many more. **www.weoutherefestival.com**

NEWCASTLE JAZZ FESTIVAL: 17-20 AUGUST

Based at the Tyne Bank Brewery and other venues across the city centre - programme details available soon.
www.newcastlejazzfestival.co.uk

RYE INTERNATIONAL JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL, RYE, EAST SUSSEX: 22-26 AUGUST

A celebration of a wide range of musical genres including international jazz stars, blues, R&B, soul, funk, Latin, Cuban and gospel music - programme details are available soon.
www.ryejazz.com

BUDE JAZZ FESTIVAL, BUDE, CORNWALL: 27-30 AUGUST

The 35th edition of this Cornish classic - Alan Barnes, John Shillito, Craig Milverton, John Hallam & Amy Roberts are among the artists playing this year. The four-day 'stroller' ticket is a bargain £140. **www.budejazzfestival.info**

EUROPE:

TIME IN JAZZ FESTIVAL, BERCHIDDA, SARDINIA: 8-16 AUGUST

A fantastic festival with more than just music, run by the trumpeter Paolo Fresu. There are events for all the family during the festival. Naturally the festival features Fresu and other top Italian artists alongside big European names. The full programme is available May but you can buy a 'blind ticket' now for just £100 - a bargain! **www.timeinjazz.it**

AU GRÈS DU JAZZ, LA PETITE-PIERRE, FRANCE: 10-18 AUGUST

A very friendly, compact festival in this picturesque village in the Vosges du Nord Regional Park. It features national and international artists on the open-air stage in the heart of the old town, plus other venues around the area. Programme will be unveiled in May.
www.festival-au-gres-du-jazz

OSLO JAZZ FESTIVAL, OSLO, NORWAY: 11-17 AUGUST

The Oslo festival programme offers a varied mix of Scandinavian and international artists from all genres of jazz. Ola Kvernberg & the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra, Irreversible Entanglements, Cyrille Aimée, Maria Kannegaard Trio, Hanna Paulsberg, Vigleik Storaas, feature. And Trygve Waldemar Fiske & Hans Hulbækmo will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the classic ECM album *Belonging*. **www.oslojazz.no**

SAALFELDEN JAZZ FESTIVAL, SAALFELDEN, AUSTRIA: 22-25 AUGUST

This is an excellent event for jazz and improv - you can expect a festival with more than 60 concerts in the town, and on musical hikes all in sight of beautiful mountains. Mona Matbou Riahi opens the festival and Daniel Erdmann, Kris Davis and Other Mother featuring Judith Schwarz have also been announced.
www.jazzsaalfelden.com

FESTIVAL LES RENDEZVOUS DE L'ERDRE, NANTES, FRANCE: 26 AUGUST-1 SEPTEMBER

A festival designed to show off the magnificent waterways of this area. The event takes place outdoors, in public spaces, in Nantes and in 13 other towns in the region on 86 km of the river Erdre and the Nantes Canal. A brilliant way to enjoy great jazz, fantastic wine and beautiful scenery. Programme published April.
www.rendezvouserdre.com

SEPTEMBER

UK:

ISLAY JAZZ FESTIVAL, ISLAY, SCOTLAND : 15-17 SEPTEMBER

Islay is famous for its peaty whisky and over this weekend, jazz too – many concerts are themed around the infrastructure of the golden nectar made here. Programme to be announced soon **www.islayjazzfestival.co.uk**

ISLE OF WIGHT JAZZ WEEKEND, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT: 19 -22 SEPTEMBER

A great weekend of music at Newport on the beautiful Isle of Wight. The festival features the best of UK jazz - programme details will be unveiled in May. **www.iwjw.co.uk**

BRIGHTON JAZZ FESTIVAL, BRIGHTON: 26 -29 SEPTEMBER

Four days of world-class jazz from the best UK and international artists on Brighton's iconic Palace Pier, linking the jazz generations with the vibrant local scene. Programme from summer onwards.
www.brightonjazzfestival.co.uk

SCARBOROUGH JAZZ FESTIVAL, SCARBOROUGH, NORTH YORKSHIRE: 27-29 SEPTEMBER

Hosted at the Scarborough Spa, you can expect three days of top-class jazz - so far announced are Toni Kofi & Alex Webb, Elaine Delmar & the Tom Smith Big Band, with many more to be added. **www.scarboroughspa.co.uk**

POOLE JAZZ WEEKEND, POOLE, DORSET: 27-30 SEPTEMBER

For lovers of Trad Jazz, here's a weekend festival at Sandford Holiday Park. Featuring the Jive Aces, Baby Jools, the Golden Eagle Jazz Band, John Maddocks Jazzmen plus Jeremy Huggetts Jazz & Boogie Band.
www.ventureawaymusicweekends.co.uk

NEWCASTLE FESTIVAL OF JAZZ AND IMPROVISED MUSIC: 29 SEPTEMBER – 2 OCTOBER

Focussing on free and experimental music, with screenings and workshop discussions. The Literary & Philosophical Library is the central festival hub along with the Globe and Gosforth Civic Theatre where among others you will see: Juliana Day, Alcyona Mick, Olie Brice, The Flame, Tara Cunningham and Emma Johnson. **www.newcastlefestivalofjazzandimprovisedmusic.co.uk**

EUROPE:

TAKE THE A TRAIN JAZZ FESTIVAL, SALZBURG, AUSTRIA: 5-15 SEPTEMBER

Centred around the main railway station, an eclectic mix of music is planned for this, the 10th edition. **www.bahnhoffestival.at**

THE NEW COLOURS JAZZ FESTIVAL, GELSENKIRCHEN, GERMANY: 12-15 SEPTEMBER

An excellent festival in the heart of the Rhur area of Germany, using iconic venues from its industrial past as well as a grand castle in the centre of the city. **www.colours-festival.de**

UMBRIA JAZZ WEEKEND, TERNI, ITALY: 12-15 SEPTEMBER

A shorter and less frenetic version of the summer festival - held in the picturesque town of Terni. From clubs to the Roman Amphitheatre, from the streets of the historic centre, a four-day event full of unmissable music in a beautiful location.
www.umbriajazz.com

LEIBNITZ JAZZ FESTIVAL JAZZ & WINE, LEIBNITZ, AUSTRIA: 26-29 SEPTEMBER

Mixing jazz and wine is not new, but at Leibnitz they take it to a new level. Vineyards, concert halls and a Castle's wine cellar all feature as venues and it has top quality music too.
A four-day pass is around £90, wine is extra!
www.jazzfestivalleibnitz.at

KRAKOW JAZZ WEEK, KRAKOW, POLAND: 26-SEPTEMBER - 3 OCTOBER

Two jazz competitions and concerts make up Krakow Jazz Week. The Siefert Violin, Viola & Cello competition for professional musicians is first followed by the Jazz Juniors Competition - a chance to see the next generation of artists before anyone else! There are evening concerts and much to explore in this beatiful city.
www.seifertcompetition.com

OCTOBER

UK:

SHREWSBURY DJANGO FESTIVAL, SHREWSBURY: 18-20 OCTOBER

The finest Gypsy Jazz event of the year in the UK - already booked are Fapy Lafertin, Paulus Schäfer, Chris Quinn, Robin Nolan and Tcha Limberger – an early bird weekend ticket costs just £74. **www.shrewsburydjangofest.co.uk**

EUROPE:

NANCY JAZZ PULSATIONS, NANCY, FRANCE: 11-19 OCTOBER

Nancy is a city that embraces jazz, with more than 80 top class concerts and events in the main venues plus more in bars and clubs in the city during the festival. Programme due in June. **www.nancyjazzpulsations.com**

JAZZ IN THE CITY, SALZBURG, AUSTRIA: 17-20 OCTOBER

The festival gives the opportunity to explore the magnificent city of Salzburg as the festival is spread over many venues. Everything is walkable and the best thing is that everything is free.
www.salzburgjazz.com

STOCKHOLM JAZZ FESTIVAL, STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN: 11-20 OCTOBER

Using 60-plus venues throughout the city, this event features national and international artists. The Avishai Cohen Trio are already booked and the full programme is available in June. **www.stockholmjazz.se**

SKOPJE JAZZ FESTIVAL, MACEDONIA: 24-28 OCTOBER

Skopje features mostly improvised and free jazz in this iconic city. It is a great place for a weekend break and is relatively cheap for accommodation and concert tickets. If you do want to go, book early as most concerts sell out. The programme is online in May.
www.skopjejazzfest.com.mk

BELGRADE JAZZ FESTIVAL, BELGRADE, SERBIA: 23-28 OCTOBER

The 40th anniversary of this festival should bring bold programming and intense creative energy. The festival presents musicians on the leading edge of jazz from the US and Europe. Belgrade is a buzzing place and the festival vibe is brilliant. The festival ticket for all shows is under £100. **www.bjf.rs**

GUINNESS JAZZ FESTIVAL, CORK, IRELAND: 26-30 OCTOBER

A lively and full-on festival in the brilliant city of Cork. Gregory Porter is playing two dates (one already sold out) at Cork Opera House - full programme soon.
www.guinnessjazzfestival.com

TAMPERE JAZZ HAPPENING, FINLAND: 31 OCTOBER-3 NOVEMBER

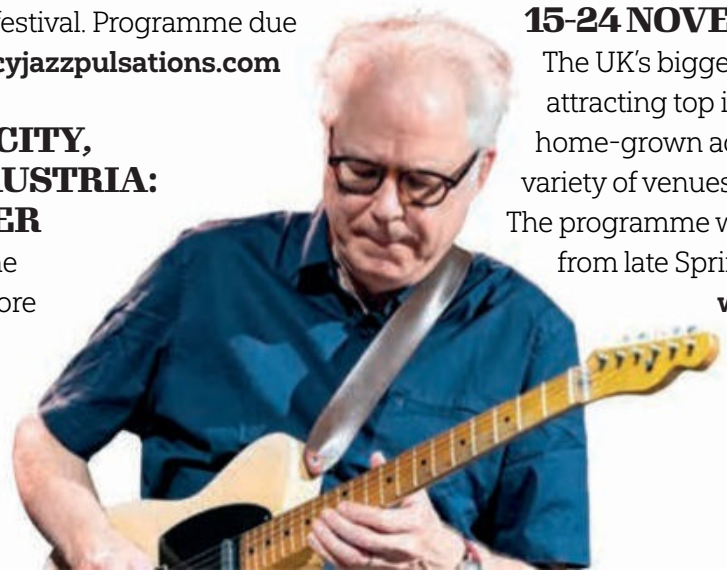
A long-established festival held in Tampere, South West Finland. The main concerts are based at the Pakkahuone concert hall. Telakka restaurant is mostly dedicated to Finnish jazz, and the night concerts are at Klubi. The full programme will be published in September.
www.tamperejazz.fi

NOVEMBER

UK:

EFG LONDON JAZZ FESTIVAL: 15-24 NOVEMBER

The UK's biggest jazz festival, attracting top international and home-grown acts, and held at a variety of venues across the capital. The programme will be announced from late Spring onwards.
www.efglondonjazzfestival.org.uk



EUROPE:

PANCEVO JAZZ FESTIVAL, PANCEVO, SERBIA: 1-3 NOVEMBER

Although smaller in size than the Belgrade festival the week before, Pancevo presents high quality modern jazz from the US and Europe. The audience is young and enthusiastic and the warm and friendly atmosphere of the Cultural Centre makes it a great event. The tickets here are very inexpensive and the fish restaurants are amazing! **www.kulturnicentarpanceva.rs**

DECEMBER

EUROPE:

UMBRIA JAZZ WINTER JAZZ, ORVIETO, ITALY: 28 DECEMBER – 1 JANUARY

Celebrate New Year's Eve in style in fabulous Orvieto. Five days of wonderful music in this picturesque old town. Programme in September. **www.umbriajazz.com**

JANUARY 2025

EUROPE:

MÜNSTER JAZZ FESTIVAL, MÜNSTER, GERMANY: 3-5 JANUARY

A weekend festival based at the Münster Theatre with its two stages; and although you can eat, drink and listen to cutting-edge jazz without venturing outside, the city has many interesting sights and is well worth exploring.
www.jazzfestival-muenster.de

SPARKS & VISIONS FESTIVAL, REGENSBURG, GERMANY: LAST WEEKEND OF JANUARY

A great new festival held in the Regensburg Theatre. The concerts feature national and international musicians - the festival has been a huge success so get in early for this year's edition!
www.sparks-and-visions.com

SAALFELDEN WINTER JAZZ, SAALFELDEN, AUSTRIA: 24-26 JANUARY

Enjoy a long weekend festival in the snow and mountains in Saalfelden. Last year featured nine shows at four locations with artists including Maria Faust, Mary Halvorson and Vincent Peirani. Bring your skis!
www.jazzsaalfelden.com

MONTREUX JAZZ WINTER RESIDENCY, VILLAR-SUR-OLLON, SWITZERLAND: WEEKENDS IN FEBRUARY

A series of concerts in the ski season showcasing emerging talent as spotted by the Montreux Jazz Festival. There are six shows over the period all held at the Théâtre du Villars Palace - featuring Apres Ski, the showcase and to end, a DJ Set.
www.montreuxjazzfestival.com

Inner Visions

Dublin-born, Austria-raised, Berklee-educated bassist Ciara Moser is a gifted musician in her own right, but the fact she's blind from birth makes her truly remarkable. Michael Jackson caught up with this low-end prodigy to find out how she's challenging preconceptions and winning fans

Photo: Michael Jackson

'Sixth Sense', or proprioception, helps us track where our body parts are in space. Bassist Ciara Moser calls on it far more than a sighted person, so she can enjoy some independence and also, know where her hands are oriented on her axe, should she make big leaps on the frets. She had a head start getting the measure of stringed instruments studying Suzuki violin from the age of two in Dublin (where she was born in 1996) and then in Austria.

After studying for a Masters in music pedagogy in Vienna she moved to Boston to enrol in Chi Go Kim's "assistive music technology class" – a unique course aiding musicians with disability to get to grips with Pro Tools, Logic and Sibelius. From there, in 2020 she joined the ranks at Berklee's visionary Global Jazz Institute (BGJI), and now teaches, assists ensembles with her utterly reliable prowess, and gigs in the Boston area, notwithstanding international tours.

I, and several other musicians, rather patronisingly chaperoned her to her hotel room at the Panama Jazz Festival in January, but as we fussed around her by the elevator, we steered her wrong. "My room's over here actually," she laughed.

Moser cycles – via tandem – skis and even started a soccer team growing up, so of course she'd already paced out distances from her room to hotel reception, the bistro, the

Zero Degrees Of Separation

With *Clarinet Fantasy*, Adrian Cox may have made UK jazz's first 'clarinet noir' album. Peter Jones meets the musician and attempts to get the story behind this powerful, organic-sounding new record

Despite a playing style once cruelly described in this magazine as "Adrian Cox's foghorn clarinet", the UK's acclaimed jazz exponent of that instrument has now chosen to go uncharacteristically quiet. His new album is titled *Clarinet Fantasy*, and features a string quartet. Listening to it is a gorgeous but faintly unsettling experience: the tunes are dark and intimate, with a *film noir* quality to them, as if written to accompany Fred MacMurray on his way to another illicit rendezvous with Barbara Stanwyck.

The impression of restrained power on these recordings, which were made at Gun Hill Studios in Sussex, has a lot to do with the fact that all the musicians were recorded in the same physical space.

"When you see old photographs of Louis and Ella recording," says Cox, "they're in big rooms - they're not in booths. This whole thing of separation - it wasn't like that at Gun Hill. We were in a circle. Everyone could see each other. High ceiling, beautiful reverb... I could play the clarinet how I wanted to play it. The amount of times I go into a recording studio, and I'm trying to get my own reverb, and they go, 'Oh no, we can put that in afterwards.' But that's not me." As soon as you isolate musicians in booths, he says, they become tentative in their playing.

"I played the record to someone the other day, and he said, 'You can walk around it, you can see everything. It feels like you're there', which is such a nice thing to hear, because that was the aim at the end of the day, to make it sound as live as possible."

Adrian Cox has come a long way since leaving his parents' home in Burgess Hill, Sussex, half-way through his GCSEs to join the band of a Devon-based trad trumpet player called Richard Bennett. In his first year with Bennett, he played no fewer than 326 gigs. Later he moved to London, joined the piano player TJ Johnson, and worked with him all over Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Holland and Germany. "It was heavy touring and heavy drinking. Living the dream, and drinking myself to death." (He's sober now.)

Clarinet Fantasy was recorded in October 2021, yet is only being released now. The long gaps between recording, mixing, mastering and release have been a calculated part of the process. "Rupert [Cobb], who recorded it and was mixing it as well, said he wasn't going to listen to it for six months. He said, 'If you want me to do it properly, I need to be away from it, and come back to it completely fresh – no preconceived ideas.'" Cobb finally began mixing in March 2022, and another couple of months passed before mastering.

How did Cox feel when he finally heard it in its completed state?

"I sat down and listened to it properly,

rooftop gym. She relies on carefully steeped memory, but also claps in the corridor to tell herself, from the acoustical response, which is the nearest wall or window.

Ciara (pronounced "keerer") who, along with kid brother Connor, was blinded from birth by leber congenital amaurosis, outlined how she strategically overcomes that setback during a masterclass at a previous Panama Jazz Festival. Danilo Pérez at BGJI suggested she connect the ways she manages prosaic day-to day-tasks and her music career, prompting an audacious, highly accomplished and self-made debut, heralding a refutation of disability: *Blind, So What?*

Further influenced by Terri Lyne Carrington and Patricia Zarate's philosophies of socially engaged artistry/music therapy, the album is poetically didactic, deploying a world class international talent pool from Berklee.

One of Moser's chief collaborators with the music was South African drummer Lumanyano Mzi. "Everyone on the album is a close friend," enthuses the socially adept Moser, "but Lumanyano is my dear brother. When you play bass, the connection with drums is crucial and we have an uncanny simpatico. We've played African and Haitian music together, and are often booked as a rhythm section."

Another important ally is Moser's roommate, lead vocalist Aditi Malhotra, who along with Nishant Shekar, who sings on the track 'I Trust', she met at BGJI and in Berklee's Indian Music Ensemble respectively. The composition 'Memory', which won a Herb Alpert award in 2023, features South Indian *konnakol*, Moser's lyrics describing how she internalises all music she hears. The track coruscates with ideas and contrapuntal elements and features impressive work from Dominican guitarist Amaury Cabral.

'The Call to See Beyond' bespeaks the fact that a blind person doesn't judge skin color or outward appearance; in return Moser expects lack of scrutiny and cliched conclusion about her ostensible limitations. Being blind begets attention, but Moser's onstage presence and charisma in Panama, with Zarate's formidable Global Jazz Womxn and also the 34-piece, generation-spanning Las Hijas del Jazz Orchestra, often make her the nucleus of proceedings.

The warm, resonant sound of her Fodera six string bass, (recently she added a semi-acoustic Marcustico to her armoury), allied to nimble fingers ready to change gear and direction at will, are met by stellar peers, who match her virtuosity on this Kickstarter funded release.

French saxophonist Salim Charvet contributes an intriguingly illustrative alto solo on 'Different Ability – Part 1' equalled for inventive originality by Lihi Haruvi's sopranino on 'Part 2'. Moser has to prepare with great concentration, but when she unspools, as on the beautiful, reverberant (not without temporal tremour) 'Humanity', it feels like a lavender bath. "On 'Travelling', I wanted to have Salim express some of his Moroccan heritage, so we cut off the 11/8 meter and played an improvised drone. In the studio it was meditative, without concerns about perfectionism. A great example of being in the moment, or as Danilo would say, in a state of zero gravity."

Aspects of *Blind, So What?* smack of graduate thesis fulfilment, but Moser is on a serious mission here to educate as well as entertain. Her hi-tech, high-level fusion is ingeniously assembled and performed with energy and precision. Formative heroes include guitarist Guthrie Govan, bass aces John Patitucci and Hadrien Feraud and she's worked alongside Victor Wooten, but she's rapidly stretching out on her own with rhythmic, harmonic and melodic brilliance. Watch out world, Moser is a major talent!.

and I was *hugely* excited. It took me back to the whole two days of recording it, and it was the most chilled-out, relaxed recording session I've ever done in my life. There was no stress. I was doing a session with all my best friends, and all the people I respect most in the music industry."

These best friends were long-time collaborators Joe Webb (piano), Denny Ilett (guitar), Will Sach (bass) and Shane Forbes (drums), whose low-key work on *Clarinet Fantasy* is enhanced by a string quartet led by the cellist Gabriella Swallow.

Cox's inspiration for the project came initially from hearing an obscure 1944 EP, released on the Rex 'Experiments in Modern Music' label, featuring clarinettist Barney Bigard, who two years beforehand had been a celebrated member of Duke Ellington's orchestra. *On Fantasy for Clarinet and Strings*, Bigard worked with the French-Egyptian arranger Roger Kay. Adrian Cox resolved to follow their example: he wrote the music, aided by Joe Webb, then took it to the arranger Philippe Maniez. "I wanted him to do the arrangements because it was him, not because I wanted *him* to do a version of what I wanted."

Photo: Jane Mingay

One reason for the current interest in older styles of jazz is, thinks Cox, that we're now living in an age of lo-fi, with plastic earbuds and tiny laptop speakers being the norm. The lack of hi-fidelity on pre-1950s records no longer sounds as alien as it used to. But *Clarinet Fantasy* sounds deep and beautiful, and entirely lacking in the old snap, crackle and pop of vintage shellac.

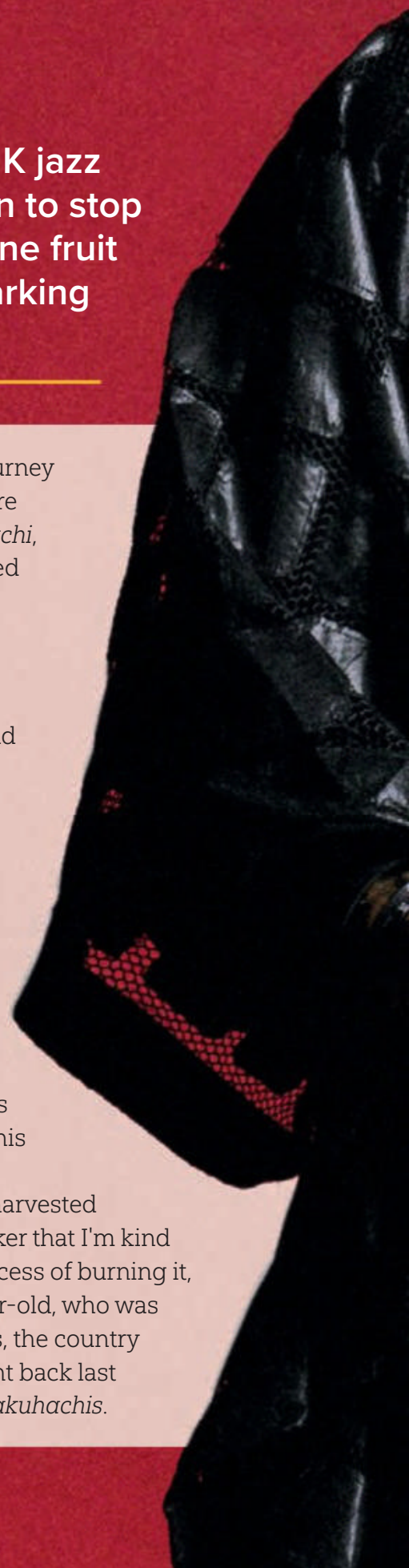
It will be premiered at Ronnie Scott's on 1st April. What are Cox's hopes for that gig?

"My style is pretty hard hitting New Orleans, a big fat sound. So it's a different side of me that people haven't really seen. A bit more romantic, a bit more in the way of beautiful melody writing. So I'm excited to play that music in front of people."

He, his band and the string quartet are also playing Buxton Opera House on 8th July, where they will be joined by singer Tommy Blaize.

ON A MISSION *To* LISTEN

Bringing a flame-thrower intensity to his many high-octane bands, **Shabaka Hutchings** has ascended to the top of the 'new wave' of UK jazz over the last decade. Yet, as **Kevin Le Gendre** discovers, his decision to stop playing the sax last year and switch to numerous flutes has now borne fruit with his new album, *Perceive its Beauty, Acknowledge its Grace*, marking the start of a new artistic journey...



A large, chameleonic country stretching out across 3.5 million square miles, Brazil has a dizzying array of music drawn from African, Amerindian and European ancestries. As one might expect, there is an abundance of instruments to bring to life the countless rhythms and melodies that have been created over centuries. The North East state of Pernambuco, which Shabaka Hutchings is currently visiting, is a case in point. He has travelled to its capital city Recife for good reason. He is on a mission to listen.

"In this region, there's a lot of flute being played," says Hutchings, appearing on an iPhone screen with his short dreads, round glasses and green t-shirt bathed in the kind of light rarely seen in Britain in early February.

"So it's important for me, in learning the flute, to actually be in a place where it is played in general. Just going around you're hearing flute being played all over the place at a really high level. There's the traditional flute called the *pifano*, a six-hole flute, and there are more kind of indigenous instruments, but the *pifano* is the main flute in terms of traditional music."

Hutchings was familiar with the Western concert flute through both his classical training and involvement in jazz since his youth, but was not especially attracted to it. Part of the appeal of the *pifano* is the fact that it does not have any of the levers, pads or springs of the aforementioned and requires a considerable amount of focused physical engagement to produce a comparable range of nuance in performance.

The Brazil trip is the latest leg in a journey of discovery that started in Japan, where Hutchings started to learn the *shakuhachi*, a flute whose warm, low, muffle featured on his 2023 album *Afrikan Culture*. If that instrument is emblematic of the Far East, then it could be seen as part of a vast global flute family that has members – all with specific designs and tonal properties – that would take any interested sound seeker to the heart of Armenian, Indian, Native American and Mayan music. The size and shape of a duduk, *bansuri* or ocarina may well catch the eye as well as ear, so distinctive are the materials (apricot wood, bamboo, clay or ceramic) needed to create these devices. There is also time-consuming craftsmanship to appreciate. Hutchings has been conscientiously hands on in his relationship with the *shakuhachi*.

"When I went to Japan a year ago, I harvested wood from a bamboo forest with a maker that I'm kind of involved with over there, did the process of burning it, left it for a year to cure," says the 40 year-old, who was born in London and raised in Barbados, the country of origin of his parents. "And then I went back last December, and made my first three *shakuhachis*.

All photos: Atibaphoto

When you've been through the stage of taking a piece of plant material from the ground and fashioning it into an instrument, there is an actual connection that you have to the instrument itself, that for me at this stage that I'm at, reflects itself mainly in how I feel holding long notes, and just sitting with the instrument. How I feel, on a very fundamental level, while blowing single tones...there's something that feels rich and satisfying about it in a way I don't necessarily get with metal so much.

"With wood you're dealing with a living element, and also a particular density of substance that resonates with you in a certain way."

"That's what typifies all the heroes of the music that I really respect. They follow where their heart tells them to go in terms of the direction the music takes"

This embrace of the *shakuhachi*, wood and, recently, copper flutes marks a distinct new phase in the career of Hutchings, who is known first and foremost as a saxophonist-clarinetist and leader of the groups Sons Of Kemet, The Comet Is Coming and Shabaka & The Ancestors. Between them, the three outfits were largely emblematic of British jazz in the 2010s, during which time Hutchings fulfilled the clear potential he showed after emerging from the Tomorrow's Warriors camp. He formed the collaborative trio Zed-U, with bassist Neil Charles and drummer Tom Skinner, and also became a member of ensembles led by notable talents of several generations, namely Courtney Pine, Pete Wareham and Alexander Hawkins.

But Hutchings, a former BBC Radio 3 New Generation artist, also stood out as an individual with ideas of cultural and political magnitude, as heard on albums such as *Burn*, a comment on the climate crisis and *Your Queen Is A Reptile*, a celebration of African and black diasporan female artists and activists. So it should come as no great surprise that he has chosen to focus on a new instrument as a result of his own personal resolve, regardless of any expectations on the part of either media or music industry.

> ***"With wood you're dealing with a living element, and also a particular density of substance that resonates with you in a certain way"***

If Sonny Rollins withdrew from public appearances to hone his craft at the height of his fame in the late 1950s; and Ornette Coleman threw a curveball by taking up trumpet and violin; then Hutchings, who cites both of the aforesaid saxophone legends as major sources of inspiration, is keen to rationalise his own decision to put down the tenor and clarinet in simple terms. It is a question of what really holds his interest.

"I just felt that at a certain point, you've got to specialise in it, and dedicate yourself to it... the flute," Hutchings argues before stating very pointedly: "I'm not a session musician, so I don't want a situation where I'm playing sax just to satisfy a job or to do a gig. It's got to be something that's specifically personal with me. You've gotta keep it moving with music, and that's what typifies all the heroes of the music that I really respect. They follow where their heart tells them to go in terms of the direction the music takes. And if that means changing instrument, then that's how it goes."

Hutchings's new release *Perceive Its Beauty*, *Acknowledge Its Grace*, which can be seen as a thematic rejoinder to *Afrikan Culture*, underlines the commitment he has to not just the flute but to the art of composing and performing specifically to its unique character and capacities. Featuring an international cast of A-list players, including pianists Jason Moran and Nduduzo Makathini, bassists Esperanza Spalding and Tom Herbert, drummers Nasheet Waits and Marcus Gilmore, harpist Brandee Younger, guitarist Dave Okumu, and singers Moses Sumney, Eska, and Lianne La Havas, the album is an intricate tapestry of sounds that sometimes prod and peek through silence. The hard, dry saxophone roar of old is replaced by the flute's warm, breathy whispers.

An artful blend of Afro-Asian and hard-to-define ethereal sounds, the deeply meditative music produces a powerful emotional heat that simmers rather than boils.

"That's the fundamental issue that I had with really cracking the code of playing the instrument originally," says Hutchings of the flute. "How do you generate an energy to give the instrument sound without the tension that comes when you're trying to blow really hard? And in blowing really hard and having the muscular approach... the muscular approach was actually taking me away from the precision needed to make the instrument resonate most effectively, without having a massive amount of tension.

"Or a different type of intensity," he continues, his flow unbroken. "The one thing I had to tell all the players, and this is why I didn't allow us to use any headphones for separation, was that we've got to play to the dynamic of the flute. And I didn't want anyone playing to their own personal dynamic and then just turning the flute up to compensate.

"I wanted us to actually have the uncomfortableness of all having to play to a very quiet instrument. And that changes everything. What normally happens is that with intensity comes volume; we get into it and start to enjoy ourselves.

"It's not supposed to travel to a place, we're supposed to be in one area. Or we're not travelling upwards or downwards, we're just moving sideways, like we're in a zone."

This marks a distinct contrast with the bulk of his previous work, where the rhythmic, raking sound of his tenor was often heard to a BPM count that was anything but low.

Here it is almost as if Hutchings is creating the intriguing paradox of static motion.

"With Sons Of Kemet I was trying to raise the tempo to get more to soca tempo. This album is trying to pull it back and get much lower tempos into the general patterning and see where we go from there without taking it up.... to see where we fit within the seeming uncomfortableness of being slow and sensitive for ages."

When I mention that there were actually hints of this methodology in previous work he does not disagree. "It's my reflection on what this project means for my artistic trajectory. I also see elements of it in Comet and Sons Of Kemet records, if you look at *Burn*... say, 'Song For Galliano' or 'Hour Of Judgment.' This album feels like something that pulls those moments to the fore as opposed to being on the sidelines."

Furthermore, the precise construction of this latest project is interesting. Hutchings wrote a wealth of melodies on flute prior to the studio session, but chose not to open his songbook because he wanted to create a context in which he *provoked* himself into thinking melodically and engaging with any new themes and band improvisations. Hutchings then played his written material to these organically wrought arrangements.

And after hours and hours and hours of recording, he proceeded to edit, to carve the melodies from the lengthy sequences of music, before there was further composition and orchestration.

In other words, *Perceive Its Beauty, Acknowledge Its Grace* is part of a lineage of albums in which what happens in the 'live room' is a creative point of departure rather than final destination, with an obvious precedent being Miles Davis' landmark 1970 set *Bitches Brew*, or the adventurous early 2000s

collaborations between DJ Spooky, Matthew Shipp and other artists on the Thirsty Ear label. One could also think of recent works by such as Carlos Nino and Makaya McCraven.

All the aforesaid cases are musically different, yet the common denominator is the desire of the artist to treat recordings as raw material to be manipulated, revised and restructured to varying degrees. In shaping and sequencing Davis' sessions to create highly influential music Teo Macero stretched the role of the producer beyond previous definitions in the field of jazz, where 'the second pair of ears' may have advised artists on a set list and musicians, rather than undertaking any active part in deciding how to slice and dice hours of tape and string memorable moments of music made in real time into a coherent whole.

Indeed, the exciting possibilities afforded by contemporary audio software programmes to create several additional layers and details to an improvisation, which is something that also happens 'on the fly' with live sampling these days, means that there is a potentially shifting, evolutionary boundary between a recorded song and one that is subsequently released into the marketplace.

Tellingly, Hutchings has been playing the role of producer for several of the artists he has signed to his own label Native Rebel Recordings, whose international roster has the likes of British saxophonist Chelsea Carmichael and compatriots, the hip-hop duo ConN + KwAkE, South Indian-American vocalist-multi-instrumentalist Ganavya and South African combo The Brother Moves On. Hutchings has plenty to say on the term producer, a flexible word that is open to interpretation according to specific circumstances.

What is a producer?

"For me, it means very many different things. It might mean putting something on Ableton or Logic for the music," he says. "A producer is someone that lends their musical taste, musical ear to material and then has a decision making process about what can make the music achieve its fullest potential. That's it. The most effective producers are people who can take themselves out of that process, and there are some things that might not need that much input.

"But the production process is understanding what is appropriate, what is needed to make the source material flourish," he states emphatically. "It's something I've really been thinking a lot about in relation to your archetypal jazz recording. That process of getting into the room and getting inspired performances is one thing and that can be 'it', but actually if you take it to the next level of thinking narratively, how do we sequence the performances we have? How do we make them poetic and impactful in a way that the arc is one thing rather than another? It's exciting to be a producer as well as a musician, a player, a composer, because it's a different approach. And it's a skill... it's another skill to be able to produce."

Shabaka Hutchings headlines the Barbican, London on 9 May

"The most effective producers are people who can take themselves out of the decision-making process... some things do not need much input"

Divining The Divine Sarah

March marks the centenary of the great singer **Sarah Vaughan**'s birth. In this special feature **Peter Quinn** examines her life and legacy, and asks top contemporary vocalists what Sassy means to them, and why she still matters today

The Apollo Theater, Harlem. Wednesday, 21 October 1942. It's Amateur Night ("Where stars are born and legends are made") and an 18-year-old Sarah Vaughan steps nervously onto the stage to sing 'Body and Soul', backed by the 'Growl Trumpet King', Cootie Williams and his Band. A song closely associated with Billie Holiday, who had released it as a single just two years before, this was an especially high-risk choice. Any doubts which the audience had on seeing this mere teenager before them were swept away by Vaughan's mesmerising voice and unparalleled talent. As the veteran emcee Ralph Cooper later recalled: "She sang with such poise and precision, if you closed your eyes you'd be sure she was about 40 and had just flown in from the Paris Opera."

Vaughan's triumph that night earned her not only the prize money of $10 but also a week-long engagement at the Apollo a month later, where she would share the stage with one of her musical heroes, Ella Fitzgerald. By a twist of fate, Billy Eckstine, vocalist with the Earl Hines band, happened to be in the audience that night. Amazed by Vaughan's performance, he encouraged her to try out for the Hines band. Vaughan won Hines over, too, and was hired as vocalist and second pianist. And so began the career of one of the greatest vocalists of the twentieth century.

Sarah Vaughan, affectionately known as 'Sassy' or 'The Divine One' – so good they named her thrice – was born on 27 March 1924 in Newark, New Jersey. Her musical journey began early, starting piano lessons at the age of seven and later playing the organ and singing in the Mount Zion Baptist Church choir. Prior to her breakthrough at the Apollo, Vaughan had already spent many nights learning her craft as both pianist and singer in numerous New Jersey nightclubs.

Within months, she was singing with Eckstine and Hines in an ensemble that included Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, at a seismic moment in jazz history: the birth of bebop. With an extraordinary range and gorgeous timbre, exceptional control and unerring harmonic understanding, Vaughan's style was rooted in the improvisational spirit of bebop.

"I don't think I ever modeled myself after a singer," she once said. "I've more or less copied the styles of horn-tooters right from the start." Her ability to effortlessly navigate complex melodic lines and intricate rhythms mirrored the innovative approaches of Gillespie and Parker, pushing the boundaries of expression in jazz. Vaughan's musical prowess wasn't confined to her vocals alone. Gillespie himself acknowledged her exceptional skill on the piano, noting in his autobiography: "[Sarah] was as good a musician as anybody in the band. She could play the piano, knew all of the chords, and played terrific chords behind us."

Vaughan's versatility as an artist saw her effortlessly navigate across various genres, from bebop anthems and jazz standards to pop, rock, and Brazilian music. With her working trio, big bands and orchestras, she recorded for Columbia, Continental, Mainstream, Mercury, Musicraft, Pablo, Roulette and Verve among others, creating a discography that spanned an impressive five decades, from the 1940s to the 80s,

Any Vaughan recording is worth exploring, but those new to her music will definitely want to check out *One Night Stand – The Town Hall Concert 1947*, featuring Vaughan and Lester Young. With an increasingly enthusiastic response from the New York audience, it offers a captivating glimpse into her early career. The 1955 album *Sarah Vaughan with Clifford Brown*, which earned a place in the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1999, is another essential listen. *Swingin' Easy* (1957) presents vibrant takes on classics such as 'Shulie A Bop', 'Lover Man', and 'Body and Soul', while *Sassy Swings the Tivoli* (1963) is one of the key albums from the 1960s, a stunning live album recorded over four days in Copenhagen. Among Vaughan's personal favourites is *Vaughan with Voices* (1964), similarly recorded in Copenhagen, produced by Quincy Jones, and arranged by Robert Farnon. Fans of Brazilian music should head straight for *I Love Brazil* (1977), where Vaughan collaborates with luminaries

> ***She made me really listen to jazz standards and the American song book in a way that elevated the songs and made me truly feel something, which is ridiculously hard when dealing with such familiar material*** – *Zara McFarlane*

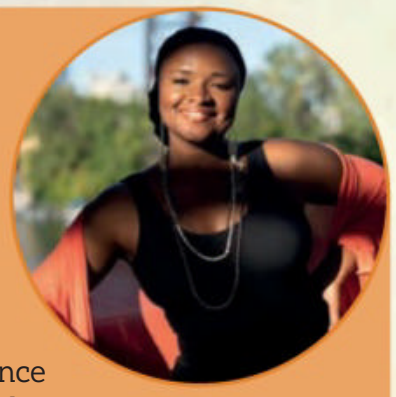
such as Milton Nascimento, Dori Caymmi, and Antônio Carlos Jobim, while the Grammy-winning *Gershwin Live!* (1982) features her accompanied by the LA Philharmonic under the baton of Michael Tilson Thomas, with arrangements by Marty Paich.

And the archives continue to offer up hidden gems. Originally recorded in New Orleans for the NPR show *Jazz Alive!*, the previously unreleased 1978 trio recording *Live At Rosy's* (Resonance Records, 2016) presents almost 90 minutes of the most sublime jazz singing. From the whirlwind sprint through 'I'll Remember April' to the luxuriant phrasing of one of her signature ballads, 'The Man I Love', Vaughan's extraordinary range and effortless virtuosity shine throughout. She brings an almost gospel fervency to another signature song, Sondheim's 'Send in the Clowns', and there are exceptionally beautiful interpretations of 'I Fall In Love Too Easily', 'Poor Butterfly' and 'I Remember You', each performed at Vaughan's preferred ballad tempo: as slow as possible.

In the US, centenary concert tributes have included the legendary Count Basie Orchestra, erstwhile collaborators and friends of Vaughan's with whom she recorded three albums – *No Count Sarah* (1958), *Count Basie/Sarah Vaughan* (1961) and *Send in the Clowns* (1981). In February, at the Madison Center for the Arts in Phoenix, Arizona, they celebrated Vaughan's legacy in a concert directed by Scotty Barnhart and featuring vocalist Carmen Bradford.

On 19-20 April, 'The Sarah Vaughan Centennial Hosted by Dee Dee Bridgewater' show will take place in Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC). The event will showcase past winners of the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, also known as 'The Sassy

LIZZ WRIGHT ON SARAH VAUGHAN



"There's so much courage and so much wisdom. To think of what it meant to hold yourself, to dress yourself, to wear sound like garments to tell people who you are. To have a gift to be able to create an energy of magnificence around yourself that people could feel and not deny, for even a few moments, is such an act of power and grace. When I put her on in the kitchen at my little cafe now [Carver 47 Food & Wellness Market in Chicago], what reverberates through the room is what she knows and what we need to learn about her – and I love this power, I love this opportunity. I don't think anyone exemplifies that better than Sarah Vaughan, this sound of who she really is and how she sees herself. And it was for us to learn. There were so many challenging times around her, but when she sang, that's the real world that she had going on inside and we were in it."

Lizz Wright's new album *Shadow* is reviewed on page 45

Main photo: Pictorial Press Ltd/Alamy

Awards', which has been hosted by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, one of JALC's community partners, since 2012. This competition has served as a springboard for some of today's leading vocalists including Cyrille Aimée, Jazzmeia Horn, Ashleigh Smith and Quiana Lynell.

At the fifth edition of the awards in 2016, Deelee Dubé made history by becoming the first British vocalist to win the competition. Dubé will mark Vaughan's centenary with a special performance entitled 'Celebrating 100 Years of "Sassy" 1924–2024: Sarah Vaughan Reimagined', at London's Brasserie Zédel on 7 April.

Dubé offers her own practitioner's perspective on Vaughan's vocal style: "She had an incredible pair of lungs with brilliant breath management, support and technique. She dared to use her entire four-octave, nuanced vocal range with depth and intensity, which was a distinctive trait in line with an incredibly sonorous vibrato. She was so well versed with articulating each note and phrase with pitch-perfect accuracy, adeptness and soulful flair – shaping vowels with a vibrant and ringing agile timbre, bending and blending perfectly nuanced and intoned notes into swooping glissandi, and embellishing melodies with a coloratura quality. Everything about the authentic mastery of her own voice informed the instrument, and this continues to not only inspire, but also inform my own voice and vocal delivery as a vocal artist, musician and voice pedagogue."

As Dubé rightly points out, we're still awaiting a Vaughan biopic. I ask her about the ways in which she believes Vaughan's legacy extends beyond her vocal prowess, particularly in terms of her role as a trailblazing woman in jazz.

"Being a leading African American woman in entertainment and showbusiness during the 1940s, 1950s and beyond came with extreme setbacks and obstacles that she definitely experienced. But she somehow overcame some of these serious racial adversities, which has in turn paved a way for those of us who are now on a similar trajectory within music and entertainment. Her mere existence as a black woman and luminary within her [male dominated] field speaks for itself. Throughout her career she somehow managed to maintain her integrity. She was outspoken in a respectful way and made it clear that she did not want to be pigeonholed. In addition, she demonstrated the art of taking showbusiness by its horns, playing the role, facing the music, singing, dancing and showing up with a smile in the best way she knew how as a leading black woman in music. And as for 'jazz', well, she came, conquered and continues to win the hearts of generations, and that in itself speaks trailblazing volumes."

For another winner of the Sassy Awards, Samara Joy, it was hearing Vaughan singing 'Lover Man' – a YouTube video of a live performance from Sweden recorded in July 1958, in which the singer is accompanied by pianist Ronnell Bright, bassist Richard Davis and drummer Art Morgan – which first attracted her to jazz. Interviewing her for a Taking Off feature for *Jazzwise* in 2021, Joy told me: "First of all, I was like, this is incredible, how does anybody do that? It just really took me by surprise. I was captured, I was caught up. She just stands there, she doesn't have to do anything else, but sing."

Zara McFarlane, the UK-based singer-songwriter, will similarly honour Vaughan with performances at Ronnie Scott's and the Cheltenham Jazz Festival on 3 and 5 May respectively. Reflecting on Vaughan's legacy, she says: "Sarah was the first jazz singer I truly connected with vocally. The emotion she has in her performances really made me pay attention. To me she was more than a beautiful voice or virtuosic singer. She made me really listen to jazz standards and the American song book in a way that elevated the songs and made me truly feel something, which is ridiculously hard when dealing with such familiar material. 'Mean to Me', 'Baubles Bangles and Beads', 'Come Rain or Come Shine', there are just so many great performances. There is something about her delivery that makes your ear cling desperately to the very end of each phrase. I think the records often do not do her justice. When you see her live performances, this is where you truly see how remarkable she was as a voice and musician. In the live performances I see a woman that was self-assured, in the moment, in the pocket and who had total command of the music. So playful and spontaneous yet articulate in her vocal choices."

In January 1989, Vaughan was honoured with the prestigious NEA Jazz Masters Award by the National Endowment for the Arts, the highest recognition in jazz. The following month, she was further celebrated with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. She died on 3 April 1990, at the age of 66. Her funeral took place at Mount Zion Baptist Church where she had once sang and played the organ. More than three decades later, Vaughan's profound influence, indomitable spirit and incomparable voice have secured her status. In this, her centennial year, there's no better time to rediscover the singular beauty of her music.

SUSANNA ALEKSANDRA ON SASSY

"When I first started listening to jazz as a teenager, I fell in love with Julie London, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Nancy Wilson, and Diana Krall. It wasn't until later that I discovered Sarah Vaughan. In connection with her 100th anniversary, I have listened to her almost nonstop over the past few months to prepare for the Sarah Vaughan 100/Chet Baker 95 concerts I am performing in March.

"My goal is not to replicate her singing style but to understand her technique and explore her vocal nuances. Imitation is a powerful tool for learning, a method deeply rooted in the jazz tradition, where musicians often learn from one another by transcribing solos. Mastering vibrato is a challenge. When younger, I gravitated towards a straight tone, only recently beginning to appreciate the complexity and beauty of vibrato. Listening to Sarah has been instrumental in this evolution. Attempting to emulate her sound has unlocked my confidence in allowing my voice to flow.

"My favourite Sassy era is the mid-1950s, particularly her albums *Sarah Vaughan with Clifford Brown* and *Swingin Easy*. I love the lightness of sound that she uses in tracks like 'You Hit the Spot' or 'If I Knew Then'. I also adore her ability to sing ballads: 'Vanity', 'Jim', 'Send in the Clowns'... they get me every time. She has impressive control over her voice and uses a lot of variation, from sounding light and playful to deep and round. She also plays with her larynx, suddenly dropping it at times. You can also hear Cécile Mclorin Salvant and Veronica Swift do that sometimes. I wonder if they picked it up from her!

"In 2024, where art leans towards the digital, her organic, profoundly human approach serves as a reminder of the power of pure expression. Contemporary singers can learn from her the importance of technical foundation, the courage to explore one's voice, and the value of conveying genuine emotion".

Susanna Aleksandra is a jazz vocalist, composer and singing teacher based in Estonia

Photo: Jake Farra

YOUR SASSY CENTURY PLAYLIST

Want to hear more? We've compiled a 25-track playlist of Sarah Vaughan's best work... simply scan in the QR code with your mobile phone to immerse yourself in The Divine...

MACK AVENUE MUSIC GROUP PRESENTS

"WHAT'S RUN OF THE MILL FOR KENNY GARRETT IS OUT OF REACH FOR MOST, AND ONLY A HANDFUL OF CONTEMPORARY JAZZ MUSICIANS MATCH EITHER HIS TECHNICAL FOCUS OR CREATIVE CONSISTENCY."
— FINANCIAL TIMES

KENNY GARRETT & SVOY

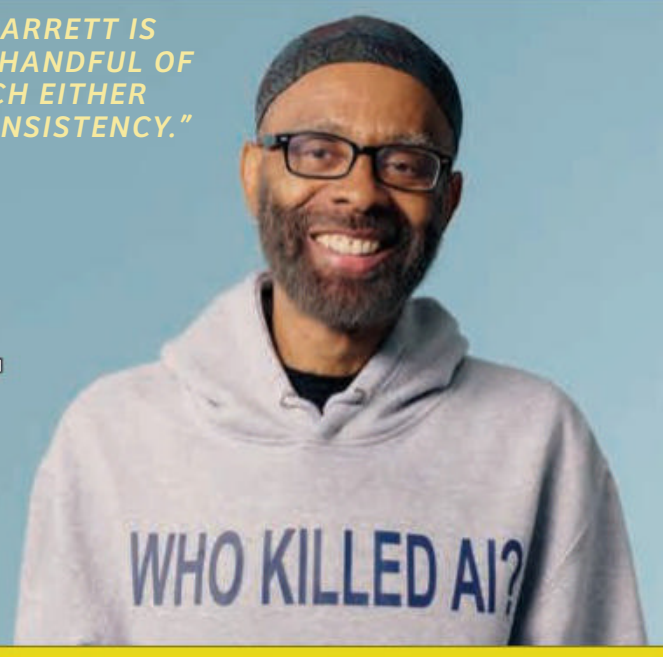
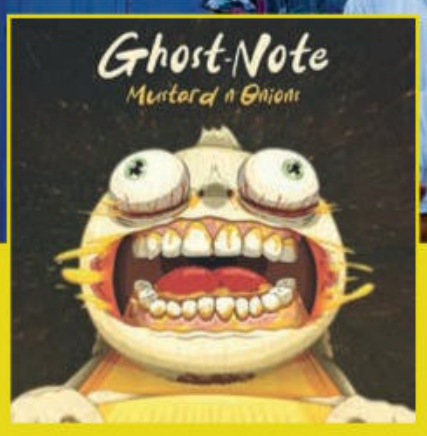


PHOTO: EVELYN FREJA

For more than three decades saxophonist **Kenny Garrett** has been on the forefront of the most adventurous and creative collaborations in jazz, having performed with generations of innovators such as Miles Davis, Art Blakey, Freddie Hubbard and more. The living legend charts yet another path in his illustrious career with the release of ***Who Killed AI?*** On his first ever electronic album, Garrett is the architect of an exhilarating new sonic playground.

"THE ALBUM HERALDS THE ENSEMBLE'S BLOSSOMING MATURITY AS A UNIT … A CONTAGIOUS, TOUR-DE-FORCE OF FUNK."
— MUSIC FEST NEWS



GHOST-NOTE

PHOTO: KORY THIBEAULT

Since 2014, drummer/bandleader **Robert Sput Searight** and percussionist **Nate Werth** have led an incredible collective of musicians brought together as a groove-based funk, hip-hop and jazz group which has amassed a global audience. With ***Mustard n'Onions*** – the follow-up to 2018's critically acclaimed *Swagism* – the band brings the funk to new levels with an album of originals featuring bassist MonoNeon (Prince), keyboardist Dominique Xavier Taplin (Toto), saxophonist/arranger Sylvester "Sly5thave" Onyejiaka and more alongside special guest keyboardist and legend Bernard Wright. Positively, unapologetically funky!

"A MASTERCLASS OF BASS PERFORMANCE AND COMPOSITIONS STRUCTURED AROUND THE INTERPLAY OF THEIR INSTRUMENT."
— JAZZIZ

CHRISTIAN McBRIDE & EDGAR MEYER

PHOTO: ANNA WEBBER

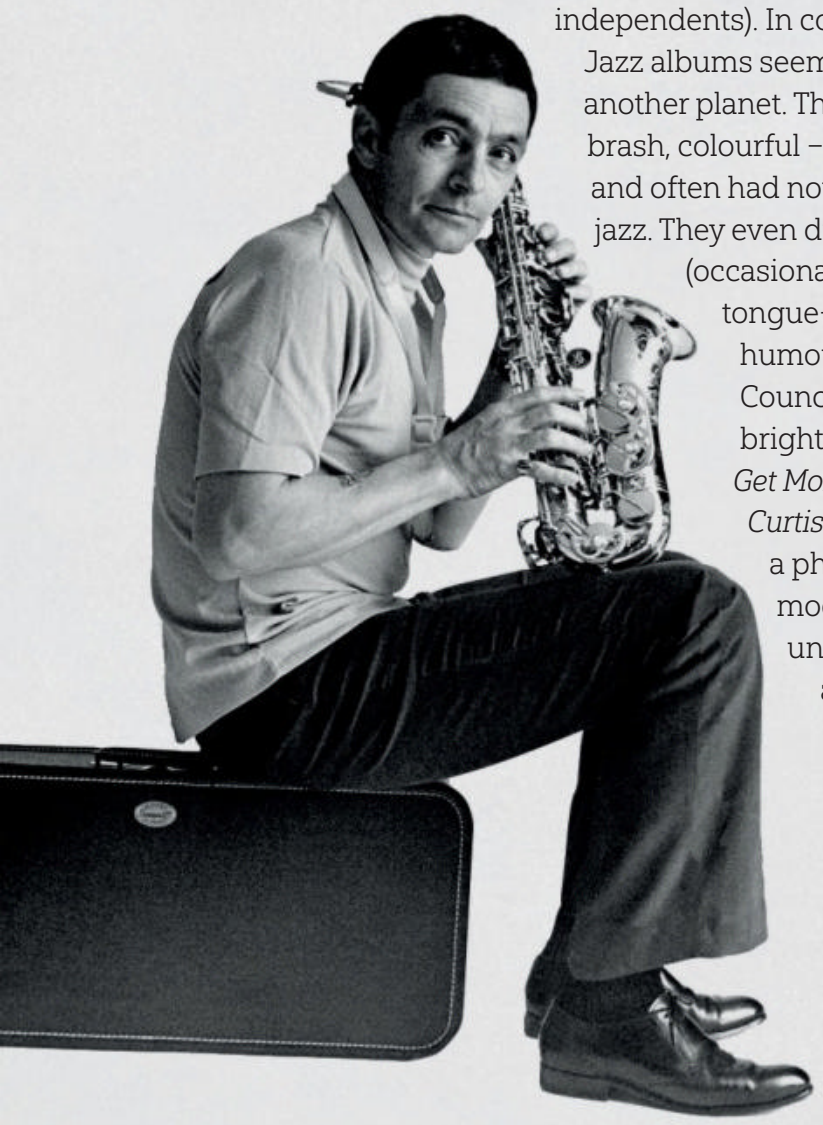
The meeting of great minds usually happens behind closed doors, but for two of the world's foremost bassists – **Christian McBride** and **Edgar Meyer** – the collaboration proved so fruitful that a duo album exploring their collective backgrounds in jazz, folk, classical, bluegrass and funk was born.

HOW THE WEST WAS WON!

Stuart Nicholson takes a look at how a 1950s reaction to New York-based East Coast jazz's cerebral, musician-centric bebop gave rise a new wave of melodic, sophisticated and definitively 'cool' jazz based in California. This 'West Coast' movement was hugely popular at the time – and is still being rediscovered today

In the early 1950s the New York jazz scene was in transition. The excitement surrounding the emergence of bebop around 1945 at the hands of its patron saints Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie was giving way to socio-economic reality. Bebop was unselfconsciously aimed at a *listening* audience, so had lost touch with the dancing public, a void rhythm and blues was filling. Magazines such as *DownBeat* and *Metronome* and trade magazines such as *Billboard* lamented the depressed state of the jazz business.

Amid this gloom, East Coast audiences were taken aback by a series of recordings from America's West Coast that sounded fresh and boldly self-assured. The East Coast jazz press was not happy. They constantly railed against 'West Coast Jazz', not for what it was – innovative, original and very different to East Coast jazz – but what it was *not*: in other words, hard bop, championed by Blue Note Records (whose cover art by photographer Francis Wolff set the visual style of East Coast independents). In contrast, West Coast Jazz albums seemed to come from another planet. Their cover art was brash, colourful – garish even – and often had nothing to do with jazz. They even displayed a bit of (occasionally cringeworthy) tongue-in-cheek humour – bassist Curtis Counce's album was bright red, titled *You Get More Bounce with Curtis Counce!*, with a photograph of a model in a white shirt, undone, wearing a stethoscope and holding it to her chest, apparently delighted her heartbeat was in synch with Counce's impeccable timekeeping.



By busting the conventions of mid-1950s jazz marketing with this kind of vivid, look-at-me cover art and a touch of devil-may-care humour, West Coast Jazz was portrayed as daring, sexy and, above all, *modern* – such as the striking William Claxton image of a Firebird II sports car on the cover of Duane Tatro's *Jazz For Moderns*. For an America enjoying a post-war economic boom, where increasingly affluent, aspirational 20-to-40-year-olds were eyeing the latest automobile and fashion trends, West Coast Jazz was in tune with the times. But constant sparring between the East and West Coast factions created casualties. Los Angeles' vibrant Central Avenue scene never got a look-in. Seldom commented on, it involved many exciting musicians, and if some (such as Charles Mingus, Eric Dolphy and Charles Lloyd), had to move East for recognition, those who remained created a treasure trove of jazz that will be explored in a second *Jazzwise* West Coast feature later in the year. And although Dave Brubeck was a West Coaster, his music defied category, and besides, his career is well recited in numerous sources elsewhere.

But why should West Coast Jazz be of interest today? After all, posterity long ago visited its verdict. Well for a start, it's high time it was viewed with fresh eyes. The binary view of West Coast bad versus East Coast good was not universally shared, especially in Europe. Here in Britain for example, Don Rendell was profoundly influenced by saxophonist Lennie Niehaus after a spell in the Stan Kenton band in 1956, while arranger Johnny Keating's 1956 *British Jazz* was West Coast Jazz in all but name. But there is a more compelling argument for its relevance today. One of the criticisms of jazz education is the similarity of conception and execution of many young players.

This is usually attributed to how hard bop with modules devoted to its study and that of John Coltrane are common in academia throughout the jazz world. West Coast jazz poses a serious alternative – technically demanding, both from an

"With vivid look-at-me cover art and a touch of devil-may-care humour, West Coast Jazz was portrayed as daring, sexy and, above all, modern"

instrumental perspective; and crucially, a compositional and arranging perspective, there is much to be learned.

The origins of the public face of West Coast jazz can be traced back to two key events. The first occurred at The Lighthouse Cafe (it is still there), 20 miles from Hollywood at the far end of Hermosa Beach's Pier Avenue – walk through the Lighthouse and out the other side and you are on the beach, the Pacific Ocean at your feet. You can't get further West than that. In spring 1949 bassist Howard Rumsey suggested a Sunday night jam session there and within months it was a seven-day-a-week operation with an all-day session on a Sunday.

The second event was when several key members of Stan Kenton's Progressive Jazz Orchestra, including trumpeter Shorty Rogers, saxophonist/clarinetist Jimmy Giuffre, alto saxophonist Art Pepper, tenor saxist Bob Cooper and drummer Shelly Manne, settled in Los Angeles and gravitated to the Lighthouse sessions in 1951. It was a turning point. The new musicians brought a new approach. Lester Koenig of Contemporary Records was on hand to document proceedings and *Sunday Jazz á la Lighthouse Vol. 1* captured the early jam session format of concerts, theme solos and theme stuff of modest interest today, while *Howard Rumsey's Lighthouse All-Stars Vol. 2*, gives way to more organised performances, again with audience ambience that attest to the venue's growing popularity.

"The West Coast Jazz style soon began to evolve," said Rumsey in an *International Musician* interview. "Music with a definite character took shape, with a special library of its own written by the musicians. The next few years were very exciting." By *Volume 3* of Rumsey's Lighthouse All-Stars series, the liner notes were able to claim the Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach had become the centre of West Coast Jazz and a Mecca for jazz enthusiasts the world over.

To understand West Coast jazz is to understand the influence of the Count Basie Orchestra of the 1930s and early 1940s and its star soloist Lester Young; plus Miles Davis' *Birth of the Cool* recordings. In 1951, trumpeter/flugel player Shorty Rogers took time out from the Lighthouse to record six sides with his own nonet, loosely based on the instrumentation of *Birth of the Cool* but with the relaxed, easy swing of Basie. Rogers was one of the great composer arrangers in jazz who had sharpened his skills in the legendary Second Herd of Woody Herman – The Four Brothers Band – and Stan Kenton. What is striking about Rogers' writing is his awareness of the dangers of overelaboration in a small combo context, while his understated skill and untroubled fluency allowed him to draw on a number of writing techniques, such as his careful attention to ingenious harmonic voicings, clever contrapuntal writing with moving parts that weaved in and out of each other and a use of transitionary passages that although brief, add interest to form and structure.

No other trumpeter has ever sounded exactly like Rogers, whose style had an admirer in Igor Stravinsky. His playing and arrangements still sound fresh today, epitomised by numbers such as 'Popo', a very original approach to a 12-bar blues, 'Didi', 'Sam and the Lady', and 'Apropos'. Six sides were released on Capitol on a 10-inch album called *Modern Sounds*. Four years later they formed side one of a 12-inch album, again called *Modern Sounds*, with the Gerry Mulligan Tentet on the other side. These pioneering statements are now regarded as good a working definition of West Coast Jazz as any as any.

Meanwhile, arranger, composer and baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan formed a piano-less quartet with trumpeter Chet Baker for a residency at the Haig, a jazz club located on South Kenmore Avenue in Hollywood. His first recordings for Fantasy were remarkable – nothing like them had been heard in jazz. Mulligan's ability to embrace a wide range of expressionism with just three monophonic instruments was a thing of wonder and catapulted him to national recognition with a write-up in *Time* magazine. What appears to be simple, conservative music conceals ingenious part writing incorporating unisons, parallel harmonies, counterpoint, interchangeability of leading and supporting lines that have,

Clockwise, from opposite page: Art Pepper; Dave Brubeck, the archetypal West Coaster; Chet Baker, Miles Davis and Rolf Erikson, 1952; Gerry Mulligan (1957); Shelly Manne

"The West Coast Jazz style soon began to evolve... Music with a definite character took shape, with a special library of its own written by the musicians"
- Bassist Howard Rumsey

From top: Stan Kenton and friend; the Lighthouse; the Lighthouse All Stars hit the beach; young Andre Previn; *DownBeat* covers the West Coast scene

even in an environment that seldom strays above *mezzo piano*, carefully shaded dynamics. A lot was said in just three minutes of playing time without ever overplaying. This was sophisticated, yet accessible, jazz of a high order and with 'My Funny Valentine' they had an unexpected hit that in 2015 was inducted into the Library of Congress's National Recording Registry for the songs of "cultural, artistic and/or historical significance to American society and the nation's audio legacy".

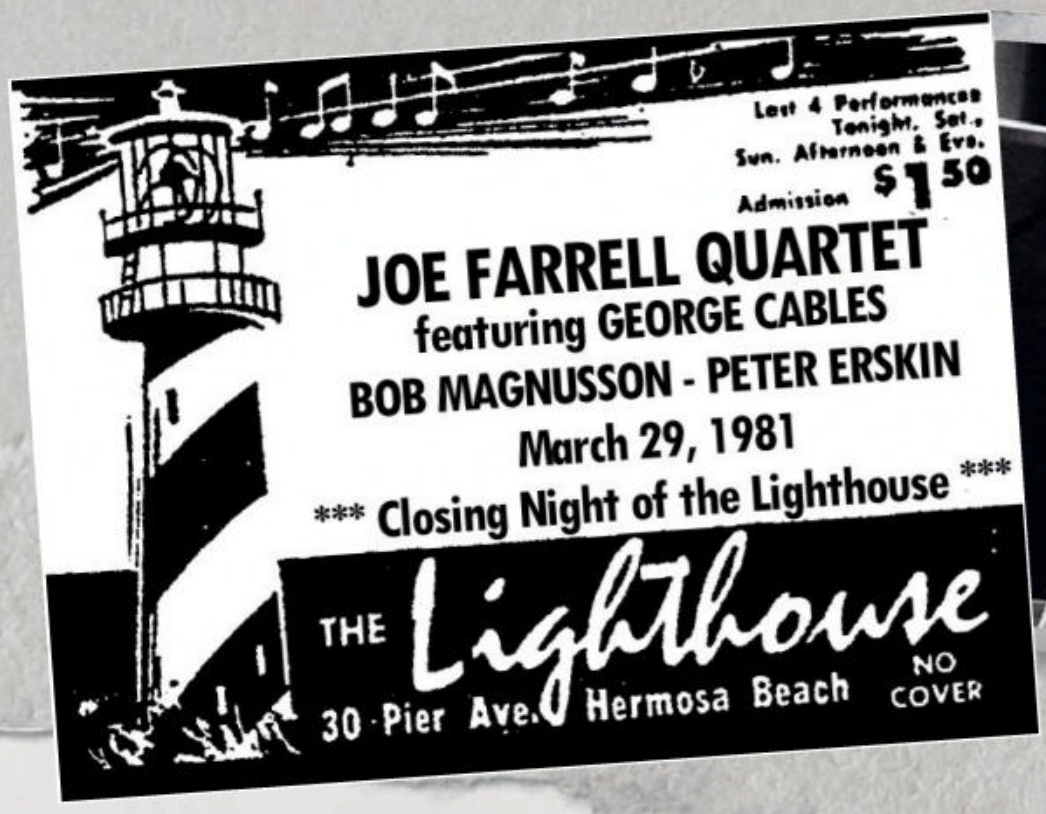
Mulligan then moved to Richard Bock's Pacific Jazz label, recording numbers such as 'Nights at the Turntable', 'Soft Shoe', 'Walkin' Shoes' and 'Lullaby of the Leaves'; all are masterpieces of small group jazz. When the band broke up after two years, Mulligan headed back East and Baker formed a successful quartet with pianist Russ Freeman – their live three-volume set reissued on the Pacific Jazz label, *Chet Baker Quartet Live*, captures him [Baker] before his descent into drug addiction and the abuse of his talent; talent that was sufficient to prompt Charlie Parker to invite him on his brief tour of the West Coast in November 1953.

After his auspicious showing on *Modern Sounds*, Rogers was offered a recording contract with RCA Victor that saw him become a leading figure in West Coast jazz. His first two albums – both 10-inch LPs – comprised eight tracks on *Shorty Rogers and his Giants* from January 1953, later released as a 12-inch LP with four extra tracks from 1954, that never lack for interest. This is suave small group jazz executed with a *joie de vivre* that brings this music alive, an ensemble at one with the music whose enjoyment of the creative moment is palpable. *Cool and Crazy*, a big band date from March and April of the same year was by any standards excellent. Later released as a 12-inch LP with four extra tracks from 1956 as *The Big Shorty Rogers Express*, it is one of the great big band albums of all time and a master class for student study today. There had been nothing like it in jazz before, and nothing like it in the almost 70 years since it was recorded.

Rogers as composer and arranger excels, moving effortlessly across the whole dynamic range with a 17-piece orchestra, complete with tuba and French horn, that breathe and phrase as one – listen out for the perfectly articulated *sforzandos*, and a command of dynamics from *pianissimo to treble forte* that has to be heard to be believed.

A good example is 'Infinity Promenade' with solos by Art Pepper and Rogers before the entry of the incredible fortissimo trumpets let by Maynard Ferguson hitting notes best appreciated by Labradors. Together with 'Tales of an African Lobster', 'Sweetheart of Sigmund Freud', 'Boar-Jibu', 'Contours' and the contagiously swinging 12-bar 'Short Stop' attest to big band composition and arrangement (his writing for trumpets is quite unique in terms of voicings and the musical feats they effortlessly negotiate) that is totally compelling in its attention to detail but commanding in overall effect. His big band tribute to Count Basie, *Shorty Rogers Courts the Count* from 1954 is similarly regarded as a masterpiece, not only for how he manages to capture the essence of Basie without sounding like Basie, but also in the integration of solo and ensemble parts so seamlessly they combine to create a greater whole. Rogers' collaboration with pianist André Previn in a nonet from 1954, *Collaboration*, is a neglected gem; both instrumentalists shine and as arrangers they both push the boat out in a way that never lacks interest.

Drummer Shelley Manne has often been described as a drummer's drummer, with an approach to timekeeping that could only be described as contagious minimalism. Other drummers shook their head in wonder – who but Manne would have thought that instead of a drum fill on Peggy Lee's



From left: flyer for the Lighthouse's closing night; Shorty Rogers; Howard Rumsey, 1955

"A lot was said in just three minutes of playing time without ever over playing. This was sophisticated, yet accessible, jazz of a high order..."

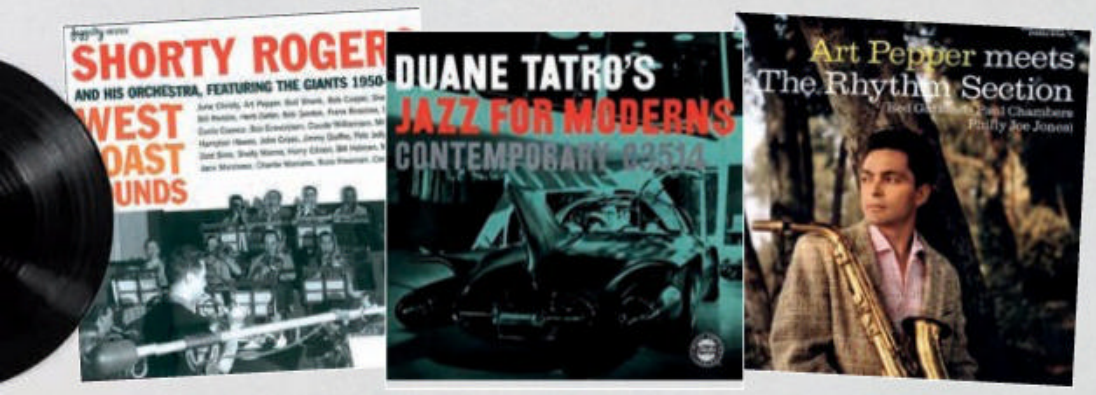
hit recording of 'Fever', to toss a dollar coin onto the taught head of his snare drum (snares off), to create two bars of magic as the coin vibrated to a standstill. Manne opened his account on Contemporary with *Shelly Manne & His Men: The West Coast Sound Vol.1*, composed and arranged by Bill Russo, Shorty Rogers, Marty Paich, Bill Holman, Bob Enevoldsen and Jimmy Giuffre from 1953 and 1955 and captures the essence of West Coast jazz – well-crafted arrangements of a very high standard that allow soloists such as Art Pepper, Bob Cooper, Bob Enevoldsen and Jimmy Giuffre to shine in cameos.

Vol. 2 is more ambitious, and a definitive statement of West Coast aesthetics, highlighting adventurous writing from Bob Cooper, Jimmy Giuffre, Bill Holman, Shorty Rogers and others. *Swinging Sounds* and *More Swinging Sounds* feature a regular quintet Manne led for a year or so, while his trio with pianist André Previn, *Shelly Manne and his Friends: Modern Jazz Performances From My Fair Lady* from 1956 unexpectedly became the most successful jazz album up to that time.

The following year the trio released an album dedicated to the musical *Li'l Abner* which veered into free jazz at one point, such was the experimental climate of the time; a period that saw arranger Duane Tatro's *Jazz For Moderns* incorporate a variety of interesting compositional techniques. 'Easy Terms' is an exercise in polyphonic writing, and although 'Dollar Day' comprised 32 bars, it had no key signature, only accidentals, so removing it from a cyclical chord progression, allowing the development of the melody to dictate the harmony. 'Backlash' is a modal piece from 1954, predating Miles Davis' 1958 'Milestones'. 'Turbulence' is built on a 12-tone row; 'Outpost' uses contrary motion between Stu Williamson's trumpet and Jimmy Giuffre's baritone, while 'Maybe Next Year' features Lennie Niehaus' alto over sustained chord clusters.

Niehaus was from a line of brilliant saxophonists who played first alto in Stan Kenton's Orchestra – Art Pepper, Lee Konitz, Niehaus and Bud Shank. Missing from the list is Charlie Parker; although he sat in with the band on many occasions, including the Civic Auditorium in Portland on 25 February 1954. Niehaus' name is forgotten today, even though he was a player who had little more to learn about playing an alto saxophone. Just play 'Whose Blues' from *Lennie Niehaus Vol. 1: 'The Quintets'* on Contemporary and what you hear is an ease and fluency of execution allied to powerful command of melodic invention that make the three-minute track seem like a solo that could have spun on into the ether indefinitely. Well supported by Contemporary, his octets, quintets and sextets all have sophisticated arrangements by the saxophonist in combinations of instruments that make a striking alternative to the trumpet, tenor and trombone ensembles of the East coast.

While Niehaus effortlessly flowed, an Art Pepper solo sounded hard-earned currency. No wonder, since Pepper's addiction to hard drugs meant that Contemporary had to move fast to set up recording dates between prison sentences. At his best, Pepper is always rewarding, and all he needed was a good rhythm section. He got that on *Art Pepper Meets The Rhythm Section*, the rhythm section borrowed from Miles Davis – Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. Together with *Art Pepper + Eleven* and *Smack Up*, they comprise classic Pepper performances that should be in everyone's album collection, among the creative best from a wayward talent who allowed drugs to stand in his way of achieving true greatness. At least he is visible through the mists of time when the likes of Bud Shank, Bob Cooper, Bill Perkins, Frank Rosolino, Jack Sheldon, Don Fagerquist, Joe Maini, Bill Holman and vibist Terry Gibbs' exemplary Dream band of 1959–61 epitomise the neglect of this significant and highly creative area of 1950s jazz.



Your West Coast Playlist

Want to hear more? We've compiled an extensive playlist so you can enjoy the cool sounds of America's West Coast jazz... simply scan the QR code with your mobile to listen!

“It has complicated harmonies, but beautiful melodies as well”

Saxophonist and composer **Cassie Kinoshi** speaks to **Brian Glasser** about how Duke Ellington’s powerful orchestrations on *Blues In Orbit* changed her musical life

“A few large ensemble things are contenders, like Gil Evans’ and Miles Davis’ *+19*. But I think I’ll go for *Blues In Orbit* by Duke Ellington. I was probably 19 when I heard it – my second year of Uni.

I grew up listening to different music, including a lot of jazz through my dad. He also liked classical music, so I was introduced to orchestration through that. I was privileged enough to have music lessons, and I started out on classical piano. I was interested in being able to write for the piano early on – even aged six!

When I was studying at university, I was checking out the big bands – I was really interested in large ensemble and orchestras, and all the colours you could get from them. *Blues In Orbit* was an album I stumbled across; and which I then listened to obsessively.

First of all, I got it on Spotify, then I got the CD. I had listened to a lot of Duke Ellington stuff, and I’d also read his autobiography. I was intrigued by him – I wanted to understand how to lead, and write for, a big band. It was him as a personality, as well as a bandleader that I was really drawn to – to create spaces for musicians but also to tell his stories. He was one of the first influences for me in that respect.

The album grabbed me because of the colours and harmonies, particularly the track ‘Blues in Orbit’. It’s got a lot of close harmony, which for me then was quite new. It had these crunchy harmonies that still retained the emotional side of what jazz is – it wasn’t just harmony to showcase an arranger’s skills, which I think can sometimes happen. Lots of modern jazz things can be about showing how crazy you’re going. This wasn’t like that – it had the complicated harmonies, but beautiful melodies as well.

I transcribed every line of [the track] ‘Blues In Orbit’ so that I could get an understanding of how the harmonies were working. Having written them out, it was easier to apply it to my own compositional process. I like to sing the music, I’ll try to sing each one of the lines, and then transcribe it. You have to hyperfocus on that particular line and screen out everything else!

I was doing this sort of thing before then – the close, repeated listening; and I was in Tomorrow’s Warriors, where that was encouraged. But mostly it just came from a love of the music, not from being told by anyone to do it. I was really, really interested in the sound world, and I wanted to immerse myself in it – so I did!

I think I ingested a lot of the stuff I was hearing then, and but I didn’t bring it consciously into my own writing at that stage. Although actually, now I remember the order of things, I did use aspects in my own work – like when I was writing for the first large ensemble instrumental piece that I composed, I imitated sound-wise what I’d heard. Plus, I also had some harmony lessons which gave me names for what was happening.

The orchestration side was great too, though I took more of that from Gil Evans. I’m still using things I got from *Blues in Orbit*, because it’s such an iconic example of how to write for large ensembles, which can be applied in so many contexts. And building on that, I’m interested now in pushing even further – like Steve Lehman’s piece *Ex Machina*, which combines electronics with large ensemble and microtones as well. It’s the next step.

There’s some great playing on *Blues in Orbit* as well. Ellington creates this amazing sound world so that the soloists can add their own voice to it. I love Johnny Hodges, but that wasn’t what was taking my attention back then, even though I am an alto player. I was just more obsessed with composition, the sound world that composers would bring to the soloists that I was drawn to. I’ve always leaned to the compositional side of things and enjoyed telling stories beyond my instrument. I also love the collaborative aspect of allowing incredible musicians who are levels above me as soloists to have their voice in my music. It’s creating collectively.”

Cassie Kinoshi’s new album *gratitude* is out now on International Anthem

Duke Ellington And His Orchestra
Blues In Orbit
Columbia (1960)
Duke Ellington (p), Jimmy Woode (b), Sam Woodyard, Jimmy Johnson (d) plus various musicians.
TRACKS: ‘Three J’s Blues’, ‘Smada’, ‘Pie Eye’s Blues’, ‘Sweet And Pungent’, ‘C Jam Blues’, ‘In A Mellow Tone’, ‘Blues In Blueprint’, ‘The Swingers Get The Blues, Too’, ‘The Swinger’s Jump’, ‘Blues In Orbit’ and ‘Villes Ville Is The Place, Man’.

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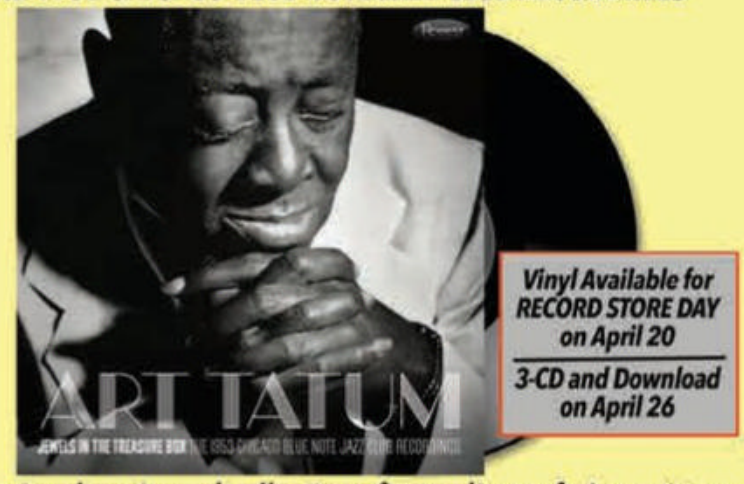
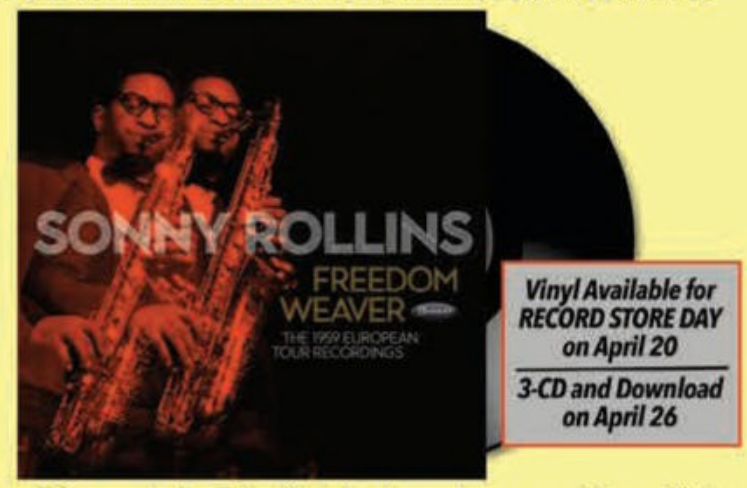
ART TATUM
JEWELS IN THE TREASURE BOX:
THE 1953 CHICAGO BLUE NOTE JAZZ CLUB RECORDINGS



Vinyl Available for RECORD STORE DAY on April 20
3-CD and Download on April 26

This previously unissued collection of recordings of piano virtuoso **Art Tatum** captured live at the Blue Note jazz club in Chicago in March of 1953 features guitarist **Everett Barksdale** and bassist **Slam Stewart**. Transferred from the original tape reels & mastered by **Matthew Lutthans**, *Jewels In The Treasure Box* contains nearly 3 hours of never-before-heard Tatum in an intimate setting. Limited-edition 180g 3LP (and deluxe 3CD / digital download - out 4/26) set includes rare photos, liner notes from author, Brent Hayes Edwards; plus statements from **Ahmad Jamal, Sonny Rollins, Monty Alexander, ELEW, Spike Wilner**, and more.

SONNY ROLLINS
FREEDOM WEAVER: THE 1959 EUROPEAN TOUR RECORDINGS



Vinyl Available for RECORD STORE DAY on April 20
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Freedom Weaver is the 1st official release in cooperation with jazz legend **Sonny Rollins** of his 1959 European tour recordings with bassist **Henry Grimes**, and drummers **Pete La Roca, Kenny Clarke** & **Joe Harris**. This is the first release on vinyl, as a limited-edition 180g 4LP box set (out 4/26 as deluxe 3-CD set & digital download). Includes an elaborate booklet with rare photos, liners by **Bob Blumenthal**, plus interviews with **Rollins, Branford Marsalis, James Carter, Joe Lovano, James Brandon Lewis** & **Peter Brötzmann**. Mastered for vinyl by **Bernie Grundman**.

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★★★★★ Landmark Recording ★★★★ Excellent ★★★ Good ★★ Average ★ Disappointing

Melissa Aldana
Echoes of the Inner Prophet

Blue Note BLUN 143678 (CD, LP, DL)

★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

Melissa Aldana (ts), Lage Lund (g, effects), Fabian Almazan (p, effects), Pablo Menares (b) and Kush Abadey (d). Rec. date not stated

The Manhattan-based Chile-born tenor saxophonist-composer Melissa Aldana's star has been in the ascendant for about a decade now. In 2013 she won the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Saxophone award; more recently she's hit a career high with last year's Grammy-nominated Blue Note debut *12 Stars*. Her engagingly probing, reflective brand of sax-jazz and thoughtfully crafted compositions have been evolving since the very promising *Visions* in 2019. So too her quintet formed in 2017 that seems to have a close chemistry and firm grasp of the material on her sophomore Blue Note release *Echoes of the Inner Prophet*. It boasts fellow Latin Americans: the Miami-raised Cuban pianist Fabian Almazan, who re-joins after missing *12 Stars*, and compatriot Pablo Menares on bass, someone who she hooked up with originally on the Santiago jazz scene.

The haunting, ethereal qualities of *12 Stars* continues apace on *Echoes of the Inner Prophet* with Aldana's sax playing seeming to dig deeper into the interior recesses of herself. Tonal smears and slides inject blues and microtonal colours and searching, vocal-like phrases reference in particular the growing impact on her music of Wayne Shorter, the subject of the dedication on the title track.

Aldana knows how to tell a story, as does the wittily succinct guitarist Lage Lund (in charge of arranging and co-production) and the fresh-sounding, classical-influenced Almazan on piano who conjure an air of mystique around Aldana's softly leaden, elegiac tones on the title track.

The enigmatic 'Unconscious Whispers' offers a new angle on what's termed as 'spiritual' jazz and is a refreshing antidote to the current penchant for stylised regurgitations of the mid-1960's 'cosmic' period. *Echoes of the Inner Prophet* is an album that succeeds in reinvigorating the jazz genre.

Selwyn Harris

Matt Anderson Quartet
Live At The Leeds Jazz Festival

Hidden Threads Records HTR-003 (CD, DL)

★★★★

Matt Anderson (ts, ss), Alberto Palau (p), Will Harris (b) and Jay Davis (d).
Rec. date not stated

This is Matt Anderson's fourth record under his own name, and the third to feature this line-up. It's a well-integrated, swinging and supremely confident ensemble: exactly the sort of outfit that really shines on a live recording, and so it proves here.

This set captures the band playing their own music in front of a homecoming Leeds audience, and the benefits accrued from eight years of working together are plain to hear. Anderson is well established in the UK jazz education nexus between Leeds and the London Conservatoires, in which he has thrived as both student and teacher, but there's a soulful depth to to his musicality that underpins the academic attention to detail. On 'New Old Blues' he deploys his warm tone and crisp clean attack in a gospel tinged swinger that conjures up the spirit of 'LockJaw' Davis with as much conviction as his soprano on 'Northern Journey' engages with the folk-inspired English-pastoral approach, and the minor-key uptempo of 'Teleforce' works the modern mainstream.

Unlike some of his contemporaries, Anderson is very comfortable mining the rich seam of jazz that was developed in the UK through the 1970s and 80s by artists like Bobby Wellins, rooted in the language of swinging post-bop but with a distinctive British accent. The band sound terrific as well – Alberto Palau's approach mirrors Anderson's own, and Will Harris and Jay Davis both earn mentions in dispatches for their superbly sensitive teamwork throughout. **Eddie Myer**

Melissa Aldana

Lynne Arriale
Being Human

Challenge Records CR 73572 (CD, DL)

★★★★

Lynne Arriale (p, clavinova), Alon Near (b) and Lukasz Zyta (d). Rec. 27-28 July 2023

Picking up from her 2022 album *The Lights Are Always On*, which examined events and reactions around the Covid pandemic, Lynne Arriale's new record was conceived as a through-composed suite that celebrates and explores shared and universal human qualities in a time of flux, war and political polarisation.

Each movement or section has a single word title that reflects one such quality, and the degree to which each reflects the relevant characteristics is nowhere better demonstrated than in the adjacent tracks 'Love' and 'Faith', the former a delicate contrapuntal ballad, the latter drawing on the structure and harmony of the gospel and hymnal repertoire, while remaining an original piece of writing. 'Curiosity' takes us into free, almost abstract territory, whereas 'Persistence' chips away at a rhythmic and melodic rock-face. For several pieces, Lynne has dedicated them to people who exemplify the qualities they explore, from Greta Thunberg ('Passion') to the young poet Mattie Stepanek ('Gratitiude'), and from Nobel prizewinner Malala Yousafzai ('Persistence') to the Karkhiv Oblast nurse Khrystyna Lapatenko ('Heart').

Arriale's trio members have always enriched and extended her ideas, and here the telepathic understanding of Israeli bassist Near seems at times to give her an extra left hand, while Polish drummer Zyta's inventive timbral palette greatly expands the soundscape of the suite. The glorious finale is a return to 'Love', but played by Lynne alone as a clavinova solo in which the instrument replicates a choir of voices giving an uplifting message of hope for humanity in what often seem to be dark times. A**lyn Shipton**

Nye Banfield
Trails And Traces

Self-release/Bandcamp (LP, DL) ★★★★

Nye Banfield (ts), Mark Kavuma (t), Wilf Diamond (tb), Rupert Cox (p, el p), Hamish Nockles-Moore (b) and Ewan Moore (d).
Rec. date not stated

Nye Banfield is a young London-based tenor player with a big sound - full voiced and declamatory with an

attractive soft edge, he'd be a great hard bop player, and his frontline partner Mark Kavuma has already made a name for himself as a modern exponent of the glorious Blue Note tradition, so we might expect echoes of the great Blakey sextet from this line-up.

However Banfield's bio also lists Radiohead, modern classical and contemporary New York jazz among his influences and this album is a reflective set of original compositions, all in straight 8ths feel, evoking the calming, widescreen influence of his rural Leicestershire roots rather than a frantic bop cityscape. The three-horn frontline lends some impressive heft to 'Rockhopper' while superb pianist Rupert Cox's rippling Rhodes adds an additional darkness to the proggy 'Bellarom Gold' that evinces the influence of Thom Yorke and co.

Kavuma shows his versatility, attacking the tunes with a brassy panache, soaring in solo over the subtly shifting chords of 'E11'. The rhythm section are uniformly excellent, with storming performances from Hamish Nockles-Moore on bass and his almost-namesake Ewan Moore on drums - newcomer Wilf Diamond lays it down memorably on the twisty ostinatos of 'Pocket Tissue Blues', which also has a standout solo from the leader. 'Song For Grandad' by contrast harks back to Banfield's Welsh roots with the stately gravitas of a Methodist hymn played by a brass band.

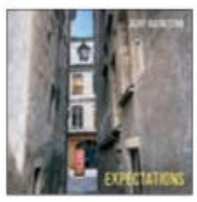
A long awaited and richly rewarding debut from an important emerging voice.

Eddie Myer

Azat Bayazitov
Expectations

Self-release (CD, DL) ★★★

Azat Bayazitov (saxes), Fernando Brox (f), Max Treutner (cl), Émile Delange, Marie Morgane Sécula (vn), Ilya Bely (vla), Clara Vedeche (clo), Silvan Joray (g), Julia Perminova (p), Roberto Koch (b, el b) and Janis Jaunalksnis (d).
Rec 16 June, 1 July 2022



Saxophonist Azat Bayazitov's ambitious third album as a leader showcases his big sound and narrative intelligence on a wide-ranging all-original set. Arrangements are neat, and, given the album was recorded at Basel's Jazzcampus over just a couple of days, the ensemble is impressively tight.

Bayazitov's tone has ripened since he left Russia for New York in 2017, and this album confirms him as a distinct personal voice. He is the album's main soloist, and it is his solos that stand out and rise above the generic. Indeed the four best tracks are those that balance his drive and purpose with various combinations of woodwind and strings.

The album opens with solo tenor sax and a shimmer of strings introducing 'Expectations', the upbeat title track. The low-key 'Very New York' comes with a guitar solo and a funky late-night vibe; 'Be Loose' is a fusion showcase for drummer Janis Jaunalksnis; and the atmospheric "Maybe Later" has the string quartet to the fore. Here the mood is elegiac, tenor sax and strings intertwine and the piece gradually gets more intense.

Later, strings and woodwinds support and interweave on the edgy and angular 'Make Them Friends' and woodwinds flesh out the gentle bossa rhythms of 'Arina' – here Bayazitov is equally impressive on soprano sax. Elsewhere Bayazitov switches to alto sax and 1950s cool on 'A Step Further' and the twisty 'Stretching Out' ebbs and flows to a peak.

Mike Hobart

Annie Chen
Guardians

JZ Music JZC24001 (CD, DL) ★★★

Annie Chen (v), Alex LoRe (as, f, bcl), Fung Chern Hwei (vn, vla), Marius Duboule (g), Vitor Gonçalves (p, acc), Mathew Muntz (b, meh) and Satoshi Takeishi (d, perc).
Rec. 8 December 2022 and 7 May 2023

For her latest album, inspired by a wintertime visit to Acadia National Park in Maine, the Beijing-born, New York-based vocalist, composer and bandleader Annie Chen issues a heartfelt appeal for listeners to become guardians of the environment – and the possible consequences that could occur if we keep ignoring the planet's limited resources.

With striking sonorities, a compelling narrative, and Chen's remarkably expressive voice at its heart, this is a recording which merits repeated listening to fully absorb its wealth of detail.

Composed by the late Zbigniew Namyslowski, album opener 'Rozpacz (Despair)' sees Chen deftly adapting lyrics from the opera 'Farewell My Concubine', with her highly charged, bebop-inspired vocal lines cascading in torrents of notes. The restless metrical shifts of Chen's 'Underground Dance' imagines a post-apocalyptic future, with terrific soloing from LoRe on alto.

Chen transforms the theme of Krzysztof Komeda's 'Rosemary's Lullaby' into a declaration of hope, while the wonderful, multipartite 'Güle Güle Istanbul' – a song of farewell – is strongly flavoured by Mathew Muntz on *meh* (a Croatian bagpipe) and Vitor Gonçalves on accordion. The second half of the album consists of the four-part 'Guardians Suite', in which Chen's sense of the dramatic comes strongly to the fore, not least the incredibly beautiful duet passage for voice and accordion in the suite's second movement, 'The Whale River Song'; and the depiction of a fox hunt in the concluding movement, 'Vanished Tails, No Return', where we learn that the fox is the last of its species. The septet which Chen has assembled play this music with utter conviction. **Peter Quinn**

Trish Clowes and Ross Stanley

Photo: Chris Kelly

Trish Clowes & Ross Stanley
Journey to Where

Stoney Lane SLR1989 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★

Trish Clowes (s) and Ross Stanley (p).
Rec. 7-8 July 2021

In effect a trio album: the Wigmore Hall plays its own part alongside Clowes and Stanley as they explore the music of their heroes and beyond. Clowes has long been associated with the Wigmore, where this deeply satisfying release was recorded. Her knowledge of the acoustic, the sense of home she has playing there gives this release an intimacy as befits the richness of relationship between these stellar performers.

Clowes makes no secret of her love affair with Wayne Shorter: 'Decently Ripped' is a tribute to the more playful Shorter. Clowes and Stanley have great fun chasing each other round the boppish theme, while on the stand-out 'Prelude to a Kiss' Clowes mixes Shorter-like touches, tongued staccato moments and sudden lyrical runs with a spaciousness all her own.

By contrast Stanley evokes his devotion to the late UK pianist John Taylor on the clarity and melodic joy of 'Ashford Days'.

The programming on *Journey to Where* is brilliant: to die for Latin romance on 'Tres Palabras' kicks up against Stanley's re-imagining of Dupres organ pieces but then veers to Herbert Howells' sacred 'Gloucester Service'. There's often a sad heart to Howells, but this pairing lift us to a transcendant dance.

And there are originals: Clowes' *A View with a Room* was one of lockdown's more substantial releases and with 'Sarah' she pays tribute to vaccinologist Sarah Gilbert who saved so many lives. *Journey to Where* climaxes with the ancient folk of 'The Month of January' (June Tabor's solo vox being a definitive version). Here bleak midwinter mixes with hopes for the new year, a sombre yet uplifting end to what will be one of the best releases of this year. **Andy Robson**

The Count Basie Orchestra
Basie Swings the Blues

Candid CAN3312 (CD, DL) ★★★★

Scotty Barnhart (t, MD), Frank Greene, Shawn Edmonds, Endre Rice, Brandon Lee (t), Isrea Butler, Clarence Banks, Mark Wiliams (tb), Alvin Walker (b-tb), David Glasser, Markus Howell (as, fl), Doug Lawrence, Doug Miller (ts), Josh Lee (bar s), Glen Pearson (p), Bobby Floyd (org), Will Mathews (g), Trevor Ware (b, el-b) and Robert Boone (d). Guest artists and vocalists: Castro 'Mr. Sipp' Coleman, Bobby Rush, Shemekia Copeland, Buddy Guy, Charlie Musselwhite, Keb' Mo,' Lauren Mitchell, Charlton Johnson, Betty Lavette, Robert Cray, Ledisi, Jamie Davis, Carmen Bradford, and George Benson. Rec. Aug 2022.

CBO Band Director Scotty Barnhart made the thank-you speech when the Blues Foundation's inducted Count Basie into their Blues Hall of Fame in Memphis in 2019. He says he knew then that the CBO's next recording should have "at its roots the sound of the Delta Blues", and here it is. Twelve tracks in all, with selected blues artists and instrumentalists, all cushioned by the mighty sound of the full orchestra, the arrangements by Andy Farber and Kris Johnson.

Mississippi-born in 1976 and initially a gospel specialist, 'Mr Sipp' Castro gets two tracks and deserves it, his lively 'Let's Have a Good Time' certainly setting the scene while in his 'Dirty Mississippi Blues' he clearly knows of what he sings, his BB King-influenced guitar solos here and elsewhere, a genuine album adornment. Thinking of BBK, some of these tracks, like Rush's raw and very funky 'Boogie In The Dark' have the strong shuffle groove and riff-based approach of King's own later bands, albeit somewhat augmented.

The 89-year-old Rush adds his very idiomatic blues harmonica as does Musselwhite on Copeland's shaky version of KoKo Taylor's immortal 'I'm A Woman' with its memorably assertive line, 'I can make love to a crocodile', Guy adding some nice guitar.

It's good to hear the deep-voiced Jamie Davis (who toured with Basie) on Muddy Waters' 'Look What You've Done' evoking a time when Basie and singer Joe Williams combined to make the headlines, with 'Mr Sipp' again great on guitar. Lavette sounds hoarse and over-blown on 'Stormy Monday' (how one longed for T-Bone to be still around) but Farber's arrangement is just right and Lawrence has a good, bustling tenor solo. Bradford gives Lil Armstrong's timeless 'Just For A Thrill' a strident push and Benson finishes with Jack McDuff's 'Rock Candy' - no vocal, just superb jazz guitar from him, the band surging ahead, extra solos by Floyd, Lawrence, and band boss Barnhart. So, a great project, well realised, the outcomes variable but compelling, with 'Mr Sipp' a new name to celebrate. **Peter Vacher**

Yussef Dayes

Yussef Dayes
Live From Malibu

Brownswood Recordings/Nonesuch BWOOD346 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★

Yussef Dayes (d), Elijah Fox (ky, syn), Venna (s), Rocco Palladino (b) and Alexander Bourt (perc). Rec. 2023

Few drummers hit as fast, and with such delicate sting at so fierce a pace, as the London-based Yussef Dayes does. To watch him groove, directing his musicians with a nod, a rhythmic pattern, a sonic conversation, is to experience a young maestro at work - and some of the finest black classical music this side of anywhere.

Dayes' lauded 2023 studio debut *Black Classical Music* - a rousing yet meditative mix of everything from jazz, reggae and classical music to blues, hip hop and breakbeats - piqued conversations around genre and systematic racism in the same way that, say, black musical heroes from Coltrane to Miles to Nina did, and at the time of writing has seen Dayes nominated for two Brit Awards.

This superb live recording, filmed and recorded on a sun-set coastal clifftop in Malibu, captures his band's telepathic flow, all the more obvious without the guest vocalist/rappers that pepper the studio album. A previously unreleased track, 'The Colour Purple' reaffirms Dayes' knack for writing arrangements in which contrast - galloping kick-snare breakbeats, meandering golden sax lines - is key. Highlights are many: the slow-burning 'Tioga Pass' featuring Rocco Palladino showcases the bassist's freewheeling prowess and crucial role as co-anchor; the 6'45"-long 'Black Classical Music' includes a drums-conga wig-out that elevates the already simmering tension. **Jane Cornwell**

Doncaster Jazz Alumni
50 Years

Ubuntu UBU0150 (2 CD, 2 LP, DL)

★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

Tom Ashe, Damian Bell, Martin Bradley, Reuben Fowler, James Hamilton, Mike King, Gareth Smith, Tom Tait, Mark White, Stuart Wilson (t), Pete Beachill, Jacob Cooper, Chris Groves, Lee Hallam, Rory Ingham, Dan Jones, Harry Maund, Richard Potts, Jonathan Reed, Winston Rollins, Ellie Smith, Richard Wigley (tb), Colin Latimer, Karen Latimer, Robin Tait (fr h), Kate Ashwood (f), Mark Ellis, Rob McGrath, Cat Miles, Dean Nixon, Sarah Potts, Mark Sabin, Myvanwy Smith, Nadim Teimoori (reeds), Martin Longhawn, Andy Vintner (p), Manolo Polidario (g), Paul Baxter, Sean Hodgson (b), Jonathan 'Stan' White (el b), Steve Hanley, Joe Sykes (d), Rob Clark (perc), John Ellis MBE, Reuben Fowler and Al Wood (MD). Rec. 1-2 October 2022

Consider this remarkable double-CD as a kind of *festschrift* (or a sort of 'commemorative document' as the dictionary has it) conceived as both a tribute and vote of thanks to the much-lauded John Ellis MBE, who founded the Doncaster Youth Jazz Orchestra 50 years ago and has been its mainstay ever since. While the band alumni's collective album note is all about voicing their gratitude to him for his encouragement and vision, one suspects that the greater pleasure for Ellis will be to bask in the glories of these performances and to reflect on the band's progress from first inklings until today. He says he's intent on taking a back seat now. We'll see.

Twelve performances, a dozen charts, some by noted US writers, multiple lineups, varied soloists, but above all a zest in execution and a sense that whatever the challenges offered by these often-complex pieces, these players, old and new, have them sorted.

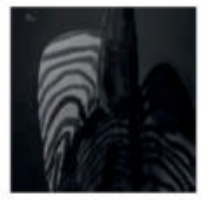
Take for example, the band's reading of the late British drummer Allan Ganley's exhilarating composition, 'Victor,' named for his friend Vic Feldman and featured by his own big band live and on record. Just to hear the trumpets tear into its opening sequence is a joy, as are the contributions from co-MD Reuben Fowler on flugel and Cooper on trombone, drummer Hanley handling every chop and change in this fast-moving piece superbly. As he does Francy Boland's equally demanding chart for his own 'Sax No End,' Teimoori's warm-toned tenor highlighted. Factor in other arrangements by Bob Brookmeyer, Tom Kubis, Bob Florence, Sammy Nestico et al, and 'Over The Top' by co-MD Al Wood, plus star soloists, many now widely known, and you have a feast of good things. Hope you enjoy your 'retirement,' John.

Peter Vacher

Fire!
Testament

Rune Grammofon RCD/RLP2234 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★

Mats Gustafsson (bari-s), Johan Berthling (el b) and Andreas Werliin (d). Rec. December 2022



This Swedish trio follow free jazz's concept of sometimes feral discord designed to touch jazz's raw roots, sometimes reaching right back to New Orleans. Fire! Orchestra albums can meanwhile use upwards of two-dozen musicians, scaling complex heights. This eighth trio album is conversely the first stripped to just baritone sax, bass and drums, *sans* additional instruments, electronics or guests, played live

to analogue tape in the spartan Chicago crucible of Steve Albini's Electrical Audio studio, where the producer transparently documents musicians.

'Four Ways of Dealing with One Way' demonstrates Fire!'s frequent roles, drummer Andreas Werliin pawing with tense, banked power, bassist Johan Berthling providing subliminal stability and tonal colour, while saxophonist Mats Gustafsson goes his own melancholy way, brooding down vacant back-streets but getting nowhere. He ends stalking through a Werliin storm that doesn't break. In Fire! terms, this is a ballad.

'Work Song for a Scattered Past' starts with an unwavering bass phrase, Albini catching the strings' sound, before Werliin's pummelling, martial clamour meets Gustafsson's indignant, wounded cries. 'The Dark Inside of Cabbage' maintains a heartbeat groove beneath the sax's harrying forays, 'Running Bison. Breathing Entity. Sleeping Reality' a more meditative mood. The closing 'One Testament. One Aim. One More to Go. Again' starts with Gustafsson's huffed breaths and rude rasps, slipping into soothing, reflectively long melodic lines, as if emotionally evolving in real time. A violent Werliin clamour subsides, then the saxophonist enters a hushed nirvana near-gospel in its sated acceptance, sounding both exhausted and spiritually elevated.

Fire!'s emotional interplay survives *Testament*'s unadorned landscape, maintaining much of their usual variety. As usual with Albini, this is what happened – less than often before, but showing the band's philosophy of groove-rooted experiment can be self-sustaining. **Nick Hasted**

Fran & Flora
Precious Collection

Hidden Notes Records HDNTS0006 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★

Francesca Ter-Berg (clo, v, elec), Flora Curzon (v, elec), Simon Roth (perc), and Ursula Russell (d). Rec. date not stated

The annual Hidden Notes festival of contemporary and avant garde music sits well with the Cotswold market town of Stroud's well-established reputation for experimental arts. It was somehow inevitable that a Hidden Notes record label would also emerge and Fran & Flora's 2019 debut collection *Unfurl* was an early release.

That album garnered instant critical acclaim for its combination of impressive musicianship and creative originality, setting a standard that this *Precious Collection* happily matches. The core of their music lies in Klezmer and other Eastern European folk musics and it's clear how deeply they are embedded in those traditions in straightforward tracks like the mournful 'Dobriden', segued with 'Hamanul''s sprightly dance or the understated cello rendition of 'Sholem Aleichem'. The simple and beautiful Yiddish song 'Feygele' ('Little Bird') benefits from an elaborate arrangement, however, and Ursula Russell's drumming.

The true distinction of their music comes when they take imaginative flight, deploying this musical language in more abstract ways. Thus 'Romanian Fantasies II' creates a sombre orchestra from looped and processed sounds, the swooping flourishes of Flora Curzon's violin undercut by Francesca Ter-Berg's growling cello while the sinister 'Flowers For Innocence' scrapes and drones into a plangent melody that is more glimpsed than stated. By contrast, the energetic 'Kick Up In 9' pretty much does what it says on the tin, chunky cello weaving in and out of the soaring fiddle, tight unison and call and response enlivening the arrangement. These are two extremely skilled musicians who, while deeply respectful of music's underlying traditions, are empowered to take their own directions within and beyond them, creating a fascinating hybrid that is very much their own. **Tony Benjamin**

The GAB Trio
The GAB Album

Top End Records TGT01CD (CD, DL) ★★★

Clement Regert (g), Gianluca Corona (g), Steve Taylor (d, perc), plus Bea Asurmendi, Josie Taylor, (v) and Rosie Frater Taylor (v, g), Rec. 2023

This is the debut release by the GAB Trio, an exciting group comprised of Clement Regert and Gianluca Corona on guitars alongside drummer Steve Taylor on *cajon*. Collectively, their sound encompasses a wide variety of Latin genres: samba, tango, bossa nova, and flamenco, all skilfully blended together with the improvisational spirit of jazz.

The album opens with 'The GAB Theme' in which Taylor lays down a samba groove beneath a seductive tango-inspired melody. The chemistry is immediately evident, especially in the richly conversational way that the two guitarists alternate between soloing and accompaniment. Both personalities shine through clearly: Regert oozes charisma and high-energy enthusiasm whilst Corona takes a slightly more traditional and melodic approach.

For all their technical dexterity, the GAB Trio remain charmingly accessible. Their repertoire leans heavily on reworked pop tunes such as Nirvana's 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' and Radiohead's 'Exit Music (For a Film)' alongside other familiar hits by Guns N' Roses and Eurythmics. A few tracks also feature vocal performances from Bea Asurmendi, Josie Taylor, Rosie Frater Taylor, and these provide a welcome textural contrast to an album dominated by guitar solos. **Tom Spargo**

Flo and The Murmurs

Flo and The Murmurs
The Waves

La Buissonne RJAL397047 (CD, DL) ★★★★

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Marie-Florence Burki (v), Sofia de Falco (vn), Paula Hsu (vla), Bernardette Köbele, Elodie Théry (clo) and Snejana Prodanova (b). Rec. 1-3 June 2023

This bold and unusual debut recording features a string quartet and the pellucid voice of Marie-Florence Burki, who also wrote the music. As its title suggests, the album is inspired by Virginia Woolf 's novel of the same name. "I let the words flow through my body and translate them into songs", explains Burki, who sings Woolf's English words despite this being an essentially Franco-Swiss project.

Burki is bracingly unconcerned with genre. *The Waves* isn't jazz, but what it actually is... well, that's not easy to describe. The writing for the quartet is controlled and sophisticated, with influences from folk music as well as modern classical. But the album may well appeal to jazz fans, since her voice has the defiantly poetic, sometimes folky quality of singers like Norma Winstone and (more recently) Becca Wilkins.

Virginia Woolf was an impressionist, with a stream-of-consciousness style that is part poetry, part prose - particularly striking in the novel that has inspired this work. As such, it lends itself well to musical interpretation. The compositions feel pastoral and sensual, dramatic and interior, and both voice and quartet are beautifully recorded. **Peter Jones**

Fran & Flora

Photo: Ilme Vysniauskaite

Marshall Gilkes and the WDR Big Band

Lifesongs

WDR ASR017 (CD, DL) ★★★

Marshall Gilkes (tb, comp, arr), with the WDR Cologne Big Band: seventeen piece orchestra with Sabeth Perez (v).
Rec. 11, 14, 15 and 16 November 2022

While Germany Deutschlandfunk is Germany's national state radio and TV station, each of the main German regions also have a state radio and TV station, several sustaining a full time jazz orchestra. The station serving North Rhine-Westphalia, WDR, takes particular pride in its jazz orchestra, one of the finest in Europe. Gilkes is a former alumnus (from 2010 to 2014), and subsequently returned as writer, arranger, conductor and soloist to record two albums under his own name with them.

But on the strength of this, his third in such a capacity, it is very difficult to reconcile the claim Marshall Gilkes is "one of the great big band composers of the modern era." Throughout, the compositions/arrangements lack gravitas, as does his trombone playing featured on 'Cora's Tune.' The exposition of his simple nursery-rhyme like melody fails to evolve into anything substantial, and his solo, which does not lack for neatness or precision, lacks the one essential ingredient for a jazz solo – meaning. **Stuart Nicholson**

Sarah Gillespie

Half Cut

Self-released (DL) ★★★

Sarah Gillespie (v), Kit Downes (p, org, harm), Tom Cawley (p, harpsichord), Chris Montague (g, mand), Conor Chaplin (b) and James Maddren (d). Rec. date not stated

Half Cut may not have the political edge of Gillespie's early collaborative works with Gilad Atzmon. This is a more personal journey, born as it was during lock down's isolation. Gillespie got to reflecting on the endless horizons of north America, which she'd busked in her formative years. Which leads to explicit references to the Beats and early Dylan, with her band picking up on raw rock'n'roll and an Americana vibe. Which may also suggest that the jazz side of Gillespie is diminished. But like any artist relishing challenge, she's seeking the best fit between content and expression.

So, Montague, who co-wrote several cuts, does a fab Albert Lee vibe on 'The Baggage Carousel', and before the jazz police rage, think on Frisell's Americana meditations (notably with Loudon Wainwright) or Mark Ribot's rootsy work. Looking through those lenses '18th Holy Curse' is as much jazz as it is Americana (as it is British!).

Gillespie's flexible vocal has intimations of Ricky Lee Jones, pained and yearning on the title track, or she can get Lisa LeBlanc proto-punk as 'Nova Scotia' takes off, though Kirsty MacColl would have relished lyrics like 'I want to cover you in Nova Scotia with my ricochet high heels on'.

With lovely piano work on the likes of 'Red Winds' and 'Black Mountains', there's much to enjoy in this complex often dark-hued recording. Jazz is an attitude as much as it is a sound (ask those Beats), and Gillespie inhabits the jazz world with both brio and twang. A vinyl version is expected in October. **Andy Robson**

Ruth Goller

Skyllumina

International Anthem IARC0078 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

Ruth Goller (b, el b, v), Jim Hart (vb, d), Tom Skinner (d, elec), Max Andrzejewski, Frank Rosaly, Emanuele Maniscalco, Sebastian Rochford, Mark Sanders (d), Bex Burch (sanza, ilimba) and Will Glaser (gongs). Rec. 2023

Italian-born bassist, vocalist and musical adventurer Ruth Goller prompted double takes with her deeply intimate, often unsettling 2021 debut *Skylla*, a work named after the six-headed monster of Greek mythology and featuring a series of improvised works, each comprising overdubbed soprano vocals, each with a completely fresh tuning embellished from bass-harmonics beneath.

Goller's penchant for experimentation and collaboration might have its roots in the DIY punk scene she inhabited as a teenager but it is also unmistakably, liberatingly, jazz; this marvellously sucker-punching recording, just 44 minutes long, finds the London-based Goller - formerly a mainstay of outfits from Acoustic Ladyland and Melt Yourself Down to Bex Burch's glorious Vula Viel - augmenting every piece with a different, similarly inventive drummer.

Emotions are again at a premium: Goller has been on an extreme inner journey from grief-struck perfect storm to hope-lit self-discovery, and the soul-baring aesthetic is maintained on tracks from 'Below My Skin' (a spectral, windswept diorama of collaged sound, with Tom Skinner on electronics and drums) and 'She Was My Own She Was My Skin' (a hyperfocused wash of ethereal female vocals made more haunting by the presence of Burch on pinging thumb piano) and the closer 'I Have For You - Simple Truth', its Phoenix-from-the-ashes vibe stoked by the fragile, stuttering percussion of Frank Rosaly.

Skyllumina is an album by an artist with a gift and a vision, and doesn't reward repeated listening - it deserves it. **Jane Cornwell**

Shabaka Hutchings

Perceive Its Beauty, Acknowledge Its Grace

Impulse! (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★

Shabaka Hutchings, Andre 3000 (f), Jason Moran, Nduduzu Makathini (p), Surya Botofasina (syn), Esperanza Spalding, Tom Herbert (b), Brandee Younger, Charles Overton (hp), Dave Okumu (g), Rajna Swaminathan (mrudangam), Miguel Atwood-Ferguson (strings), Saul Williams, Anum Lyapo, Elucid, Laraaji, Moses Sumney, Eska, Lianne La Havas (v), Floating Points, Chris Scholar (elec), Nasheet Waits, Marcus Gilmore (d) and Carlos Nino (perc). Rec. 2023

Perceive Its Beauty, Acknowledge Its Grace can be seen and heard as a conceptual rejoinder to *Afrikan Culture*. That album marked the studio debut of Shabaka Hutchings as a flautist and he also plays the instrument on this set, but the titles create continuity of sorts as we are invited to reflect on the bounty of the Motherland.

An international cast of renowned musicians, with the likes of Jason Moran and Nduduzu Makathini in the piano chair alone, is used in a wide variety of configurations. The result is some of the most meditative music Hutchings has made in his career to date, with the focused restraint, if not containment of the players leading to a very collective kind of creation whereby it feels as if all the sounds are sensually floating on a single sound cloud that has clear Afro-Asian or 'nature music' implications . Not that there isn't individual nuance or flourish. In situations where understatement is at a premium the superior touch of Moran on the keyboard, or the heavenly voices of Moses Sumney and Eska make a difference. An intriguing blend of influences and ideas that is well helmed by Hutchings's artfully low warm and breathy flute lines. **Kevin Le Gendre**

Ill Considered

Precipice

New Soil NS0055 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★

Idris Rahman (ts), Liran Donin (el b, b) and Emre Ramazanoglu (d). Rec. date not stated

There's a fitting back to basics approach to *Precipice*, the London trio revelling in a menacing minimalism (underscored by song titles such as 'And Then There Were Three'), with the trio's tightly honed sound eschewing the expansive sonics and numerous guests of 2021's *Liminal Space*.

This latest outing starts in meditative terrain with 'Jellyfish', which soon establishes the sonic space and finds Rahman building a head of steam for a pile-driving solo. The sparse mood is maintained throughout the first third of the record, in a more measured approach to their early records, that went for a full-on visceral assault on the listener's senses. Yet, things soon start to ramp up, first through 'Vespa Crabro' where Rahman's saxophone leads us into a heavier domain, piling on the tension, and then 'Black Lacquer' with Donin's bass drawing the trio into

Ruth Goller

Photo: Zak Watson

a crescendo of intensity.

Recorded in a tiny three-metre square studio in three two-hour sessions, the smell of sweat coming off the walls is palpable as they interchange lines and rhythms to create a groove. This is perhaps best exemplified on 'Linus With The Sick Burn', where Donin's quick-witted bass ducks and weaves between sax and drums. When calm descends it's an uneasy one, 'Solenopsis' stretching out with middle eastern squalls of sax above and frenzied percussion below, while 'Katabatic' maintains a gently walking bass and knotty sax lines throughout. Perhaps this band's most mature album to date, the hard touring has forged a deep empathy between this trio, whose live shows will doubtless see these pieces evolve even further.

Tom Berry

James Brandon Lewis Quartet
Transfiguration

Intakt CD400 (CD, DL) ★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

James Brandon Lewis (ts), Aruan Ortiz (p), Brad Jones (b) and Chad Taylor (d). Rec. 2022

In the third and final section of 'Triptych', the highlight of this outstanding album James Brandon Lewis' quartet engages in a few tempo changes. The medium fast beat on which they started comes right down to ballad pace but it is much more than the shift of speed that catches the ear. The players suggest that the notes of the initially fast theme conspire to hang if not freeze in mid air and the effect is enchanting, making what was punchy and rhythmic languorous and melodic.

They then bring the pace right back up and the shock from the slumber hits hard. It is symptomatic of the vivid drama that permeates this new work which sees Lewis, an authoritative, stately saxophonist continue to make his quartet one of the most important bands in contemporary creative music. Its specific language, a compelling alloy of avant-garde and straightahead sensibilities that creates flexi-harmony and vari-rhythm, is steeped in history yet not trapped by any ready-made cliché. The ensemble sound can be tough, grainy and heavy, but also lyrical and plaintive, as exemplified by the beautiful gospel-tinged closer, 'Elan Vital', which betrays the known interest Lewis has for the music of Mahalia Jackson among others. This latest release further strengthens the argument that Lewis really is a modern-day tenor titan.

Kevin Le Gendre

Sarah L King
Fire Horse

Peccadillo/ECN Music PD00151921 (CD, DL) ★★★★

Sarah L King (v), James McMillan (flhn), Chris Trave (tb), Jim Watson (p, ky), Laurence Cottle (el b), Jeremy Brown (b), Ian Thomas (d), Claire Martin, Ian Shaw (bkv). Rec. date not stated

Expertly produced by Claire Martin and beautifully recorded by James McMillan at Quiet Money Studios in Hastings, this 12-track debut from singer-songwriter Sarah L King presents eight of her originals plus imaginative arrangements of a quartet of covers. The latter includes a song which celebrates the seventieth anniversary of its first release next year, Bob Dorough and Terrell Kirk's 'Devil May Care', Billy Strayhorn's 'Lush Life', and Oliver Nelson's 'Stolen Moments' (with Gail Fisher's lyrics) in which McMillan on flugel and Chris Trave on trombone add welcome heft and textural interest.

And, pick of the bunch, if Donald Fagen had reimagined Gamble and Huff's 'Show You The Way To Go' – a Philly soul hit for The Jacksons in 1977 – and included it as a bonus track on *The Nightfly*, you suspect it might have turned out in a similar way to the swinging version heard here. There are some fine originals too. 'Holding On To Love' possesses a Steely Dan-esque smoothness, with Laurence Cottle's octave pedal providing some potent bottom end. The heartfelt, confessional 'Born Yesterday' lingers long in the memory, and with its 6/4 rhythmic lilt, harmonic surprises and mellifluous backing vocals courtesy of Martin and Ian Shaw, 'Mystery Ride' exudes a Burt Bacharach richness. **Peter Quinn**

Cassie Kinoshi's seed.
gratitude

International Anthem IARC81 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★

Cassie Kinoshi (as), Jack Banjo Courtney, Joseph Oti-Akenteng, Sheila Maurice-Grey (t), Deji Ijishakin (ts), Joe Bristow (tb), Hanna Mbuya (tba), Maria Chiara Argiro (p), Shirley Tetteh (g), Clare Bennett (f), Karl Onibuje, Rio Kai (b), Patrick Gabriel-Boyle (d), Alastair Penman (cl, bcl), Ellie Consta, Gillon Cameron (vn) Jordan Bergmans (vla) James Douglas (c). Rec. 2023

Casssie Kinoshi is staking a claim as one of the most ambitious members of what could be called the 2010s Tomorrow's Warriors graduates. She has keen orchestral interests. If her Seed Ensemble's debut *Driftglass* showed an ability to intelligently score horns and rhythm section then this new offering raises the stakes.

Everything is bigger. More brass, reeds and strings, notably the two double basses that bring great might to a mighty sound. The composing and arranging, which deploy effective counterpoint and often position Shirley Tetteh's strikingly ethereal guitar chords as a kind of glow amid the darker harmonies, are tasteful, and Kinoshi is clearly developing her marks of distinction as a writer.

At times there are slight echoes of the atmospheric, violin-laden sound 4-Hero created with their audacious blend of drum&bass, soul and jazz in the early 2000s, but as accomplished as *gratitude* is the music would benefit from a greater variety of tempo, texture and ambiance. Kinoshi has settled into a not uninteresting groove, but she might do well to settle out of it. **Kevin Le Gendre**

Kjetil Mulelid
Agoja

Odin ODINCD/LP9585 (CD, LP, DL)

★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

Kjetil Mulelid (p, ky), Bárður Reinert Poulsen (b), Andreas Winther (d), Lars Horntveth (pedal steel), plus Arve Henriksen, Mathias Eick, Lyder Røed (t), Selma French (vn), Martin Myhre Olsen (ts, ss), Trygve Seim (ts), Sasha Berliner (vib) and Signe Emmeluth (as). Rec. 6-8 December 2022

Norway's jazz scene often sits happily out on its own limb – the native sound palette swirling with folkloric flourishes and breathy lyricism. Thus, it's to burgeoning piano talent Kjetil Mulelid's credit that he's forged an intuitive link to more conventional sounds, making space for solos and collective improvisation on this wonderfully open-hearted set.

His third album to date, you know you're doing something right when you've got Jaga Jazzist mainman Lars Horntveth on shimmering lap steel on a clutch of tracks; add to that the cream of the trumpet crop with Henriksen and Eick blowing up a storm, plus a searing soprano solo from Martin Myhre Olsen on the broiling 'Heroes' and it's clear the keyboardist is an inspirational presence.

Having won plaudits for his 2021 debut solo album, simply titled *Piano*, here it's a unified group sound that's the focus on *Agoja* (apparently the first word uttered by his baby son).

With the shifting cast of musicians infusing each track with textural variety, this is large-ensemble jazz that breathes to its own natural rhythms. There are surprises too, such as NYC-based vibist Sasha Berliner's appearance on 'Waiting Song', spiking the music with her own finely wrought lines, while the preceding 'A Prayer For Peace' rolls with an impassioned rubato feel, that allows the tenor cries of Trygve Seim and alto of Signe Emmeluth to rage and then melt into sadness.

Couple this to a softly pulsing groove sensibility on opener 'Alone' or the spaced grandeur of closer 'Kingdom, Slowly Disappearing' (with delicious, thunked, low piano notes) and one gets the feeling Mulelid has with this album created a modern Nordic masterpiece. **Mike Flynn**

Jowee BASH Omicil
Spiritual Healing Bwa Kayiman Freedom Suite

Bash! Village BV01 (2 LP, DL) ★★★★

Jowee BASH Omicil (as, ts, ss, b cl, f, cornet, v, p), Randy KerBer, Jonathan Jurion (p, el p), Jenda Manga (b) Arnaud Dolmen and Yoann Danier (d, perc). Rec. 2021

Some 10 years ago Jowee Omicil was being touted as the next big thing in Caribbean jazz. But the buzz died down before the Haitian saxophonist could make a serious breakthrough in the mainstream, perhaps because expectations were too high, and his recordings, such as *Let's BasH* were inconsistent, caught awkwardly between the folklore of his homeland and neo-soul. This new project is a completely different kettle of fish. It is essentially the fulfillment of the talent that set off the hype way back when.

Spiritual Healing is an ambitious concept album, a triumph of socio-political commentary as well as of musical excellence insofar as it celebrates one of the most important events in history, black or otherwise, the 1791 Haitian revolution that saw enslaved Africans overthrow European colonial forces and provide a rare example of those who are exploited besting those who have exploited.

The fact that Omicil has written a suite to convey this rather than a series of compositions gives the music a sense of continuous action or unstoppable, unfolding drama that serves the gravitas of the subject matter. The balance struck between loose, spontaneous interplay, tight rhythmic passages and melodic declarations that could well be a call to arms or a lament for lives given for the cause, is excellent. In any case the leader's stirring vocals and enticing solos on cornet as well as several reeds makes for a very broad sound palette that is well enhanced by Arnaud Dolmen and Yoann Danier's agile percussion, particularly the Ka drum as well as western kit, while Jonathan Jurion and Randy KerBer's keys, at times dissonant and spectral, at times tonal and soothing, add substantial further nuance.

The result is music of immense richness, that stands in the lineage of the African-Caribbean avant-garde pioneered by the likes of the great Jacques Coursil. Omicil comes of artistic age in quite stunning fashion.

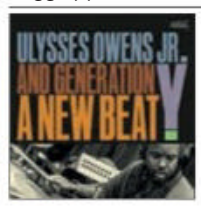
Kevin Le Gendre

Ulysses Owens Jr and Generation Y
A New Beat

Cellar Music Group CMR031323 (CD, DL)

★★★

Ulysses Owen Jr (d), Benny Bernack III, Anthony Hervey (t), Sarah Hanahan, Erena Terakubo (as), Luther Allison, Tyler Bullock (p), Phillip Norris, Ryoma Takenaga (b) and Milton Suggs (v). Rec. 13 March 2023



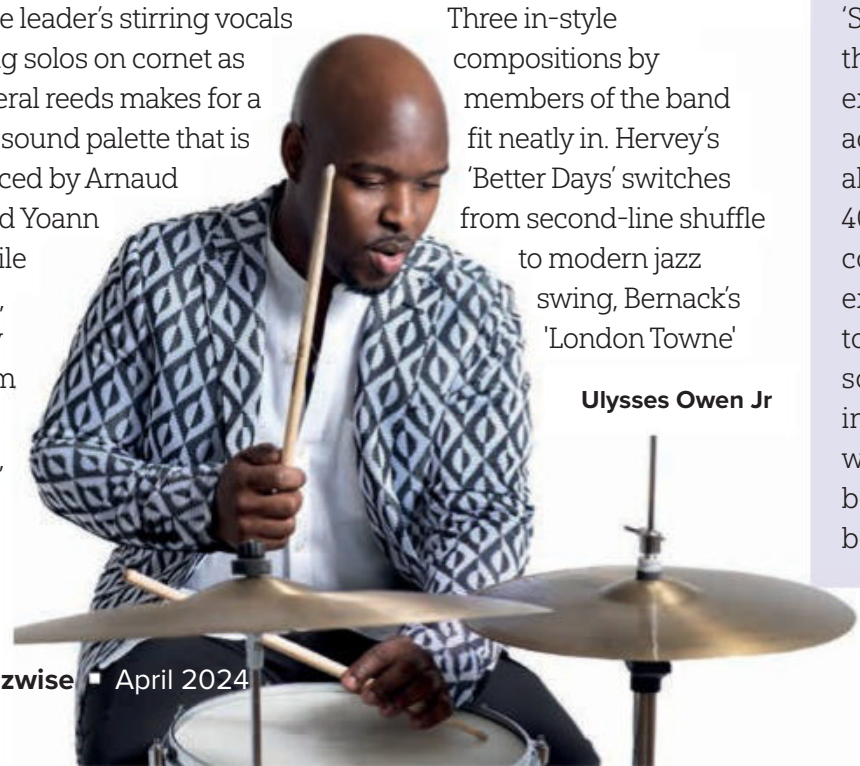
The sharp press rolls, form-marking accents and rhythmic drive that mark Ulysses Owens Jrs' approach to drumming are steeped in the legacy of Art Blakey, albeit laced with hints of shuffles and soul. Covers of compositions by Cannonball Adderley, Roy Hargrove and George Cables confirm the broad outlines of that approach. Owens, through his seven-year professorship at Juilliard, is also following Blakey's path as talent scout and mentor.

Owens founded Generation Y four years ago as a vehicle to hone the small-group acoustic jazz skills of a select group of his students. And, on the evidence of this debut release, lessons have been well learned. The opener, Adderley's 'Sticks' finds Benny Bernack III and Sarah Hanahan blowing up a storm on trumpet and alto sax and Anthony Hervey captures the lyricism of the late Roy Hargrove's 'Soulful.' The experienced Milton Suggs guests on the gospel-tinged waltz 'Heartful of Rhythm'.

Three in-style compositions by members of the band fit neatly in. Hervey's 'Better Days' switches from second-line shuffle to modern jazz swing, Bernack's 'London Towne' is slinky and the ballad 'Until I See You Again', by pianist Luther Allison, is beautifully worked and the album's standout track. The set finishes with Ray Bryant's 'Chicken and Dumplings', a frequent Blakey set-closer.

Solid showcase and a special mention for bassist Phillip Norris for adding contemporary moves to Owens' accents and prods.

Mike Hobart



Ulysses Owen Jr

Emile Parisien
Let Them Cook

ACT Music ACTCD/LP9983 (CD, LP DL)

★★★

Emile Parisien (ss, effects), Julien Touéry (p), Ivan Gélugne (b) and Julien Loutelier (d, elec). Rec. 2023

The misty, mysterioso atmosphere with which this album starts says much about the Emile Parisien quartet's evocative ability. A similar range of colour and ambience is heard on much of what is a consistent piece of work. The French soprano saxophonist has been nothing if not eclectic in his career and it comes as no surprise that his well marshaled quartet slides into dance music territory on occasion and also drifts into sultry, skulking electro-acoustic waters anchored by the whiplash effects of Julien Loutelier's drums.

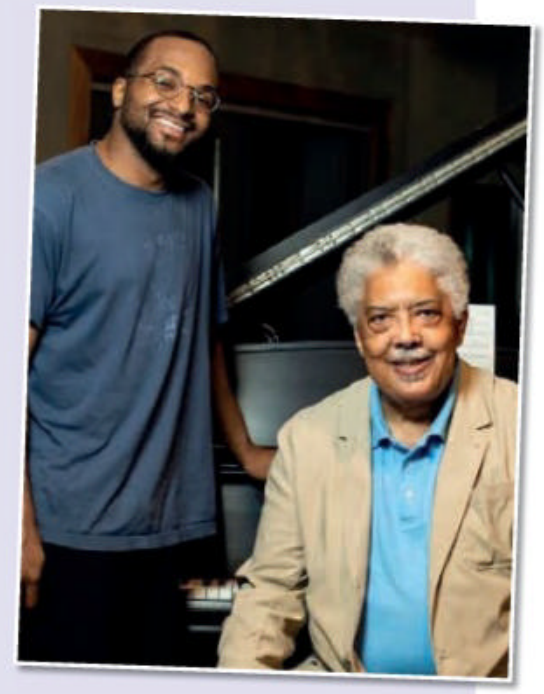
Some of the material is Shorteresque in terms of its compositional character rather than Parisien's horn sound, which leans more to Steve Lacy. But there is sufficient strength of character in the mesh of organic and synthetic *timbres* to make this an interesting and engaging listen, and the wily use of technology throughout suggests that things might well go to another creative level on stage. **Kevin Le Gendre**

Rufus Reid & Sullivan Fortner
It's the Nights I Like

Sunnyside Communications SSC 1730 (CD, DL) ★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

Rufus Reid (b) and Sullivan Fortner (p). Rec. 5 July 2021

A bass and piano duo might not have to play gentle music, but when it does, the range of expression is compressed into a narrower spectrum than other, louder, forms of jazz and is all the more rewarding for it.



The title track, for example (a Reid original), romps along, and within a few bars there's no thought that this is 'just a duo'. It's a fully involving piece, with Sullivan playing with time above Rufus' impeccable foundations.

But – as the generations of musicians at William Paterson University who benefited from his experience and mentoring can testify – Reid is also an inspiration to bass players everywhere. His entirely solo exploration of Ellington's 'Sophisticated Lady' here shows exactly why: stating the melody, then seeming to introduce himself as soloist, before an exemplary improvisation that seems to have his invisible self as accompanist. Heard live, Rufus is a mesmerising player, and this album comes close to communicating that. Despite the 40-something year age gap between them, Sullivan is completely on the same wavelength, and their mutual exploration of everything from the old standard 'Sweet Lorraine' to a version of Jimmy Rowles's 'The Peacocks' (that has Reid soloing over a subtle piano background), shares their joyful investigations with us. There are several Reid originals here of which the tricksy 'Come Out and Play' is a perfect example, before the album closes with a homage to Eubie Blake in a beautiful rendition of his standard 'Memories of You'. **Alyn Shipton**

Osian Roberts

Chris Potter
Eagle's Point
Edition EDN1227 (CD, 2 LP, DL) ★★★★

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Chris Potter (ts, b-cl, ss), Brad Mehldau (p), John Patitucci (db), Brian Blade (d). Rec. 2022

Chris Potter is a towering figure in the world of modern-day sax-jazz. But he's also an original composer of strong themes that are harmonically challenging yet easily digestible. No more so than on Potter's new release, *Eagle's Point*, a follow-on from previous studio album *Sunrise Reprise,* released in 2021. The latter was recorded in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic and perhaps in consequence had a hunger, a cathartic energy about it, his Circuits trio embracing a broad contemporary jazz soundworld.

The new recording, his fifth issued by the UK jazz label Edition, sees Potter return to the classic acoustic jazz quartet setting, with support from a new line-up of equivalent A-list jazz musicians, all of which need no introduction: John Patitucci and Brian Blade (ie. the rhythm section from Wayne Shorter's supernatural post-noughties quartet), and the exceptional pianist Brad Mehldau.

Potter injects a mix of both tough and tender aspects of his primary influences Rollins and Trane, and Patitucci and Mehldau are at the height of their storytelling powers soloing on 'Cloud Message', a sensuous swinger that fizzes with Patitucci and Blade's driving yet feathery swing. Potter is less sinewy, more purely lyrical on bass clarinet introducing the bossa-tinged sweetener 'Indigo Ildiko' before rounding off robustly in more intensely felt Trane-like fashion on tenor. Among other highlights are the elegant, flamenco-infused 'Malaga Moon' which features an exquisite contribution from Mehldau, and a Joe Henderson-informed snappy latin-funk track 'Horizon Dance' that concludes a classy, well-balanced set of originals. For this most unassuming of supergroups, it's never about anything else other than the music. **Selwyn Harris**

Osian Roberts
Bop Viveur
Hard Bop 33012 (CD) ★★★★

Osian Roberts (ts), Rob Barron (p), Jeremy Brown (b) and Matt Fishwick (d). Rec. 10 March 2020

By naming their jointly-founded label as they did, Roberts and the Fishwick brothers made clear their creative intentions and haven't deviated since. Good for them and good, specifically, for Roberts whose debut 'name' album this is.

Past notices have referred to his early Rollins sound and viewpoint and there's nothing here to suggest any other inclination. What he has added is greater assurance, and a desire to build complex ideas and the confidence to accomplish them. In short, he has the hard bop tenor style sorted, this a calling card to savour. He has also picked well-crafted but lesser-known originals by composers he admires, plus a couple of standards to work on. All that and rhythm section players who think as he does.

Roberts relishes tackling pieces with complex shapes, as with 'Zec' by Thad Jones, taking its jagged outline at speed, and laying idea upon idea as he improvises, Barron equally nimble in solo. Tadd Dameron's 'Theme of No Repeat' is handled more calmly, Roberts threading his way through its slightly arcane structure with Barron excelling in a fast-moving solo, the swing groove just right. 'Time Waits' by Bud Powell, is pensive as if in tribute to a past master, Brown poised as he is throughout.

Barry Harris' 'Seein' Red' is pure bebop, the tenor trenchant and to the point, Barron's solo like a master class, literate and crowded with twists and turns. More good things come with Shirley Scott's 'Big George,' Roberts quick on the draw, and 'I'll Remember April,' taken slow, tone and tempo throttled down. Brown and Fishwick solo capably and support superbly. Fishwick says that Roberts is underrated and deserves wider recognition. This should do the trick. **Peter Vacher**

Otis Sandsjö
Y-OTIS TRE
We Jazz Records WJ 63 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★

Otis Sandsjö (as, ts, bs, acl, elec), Petter Eldh (b, el b), Dan Nicholls (p, ky), Tilo Weber, Lukas König, Jamie Peet (d, perc), Henrik Munkeby Nørstebø (tb) and Kathrin Pechlof (hp, sampling). Rec. date not stated

Saxophonist Otis Sandsjö, fellow Swede (and bass player) Petter Eldh and UK keyboard player Dan Nicholls make up the core trio at the heart of Sandsjö's Berlin-based Y-OTIS project. It is, however, far from straightforward to pick them out in the welter of studio electronica and cascading structural ideas that defines their third album's sound.

The music is intentionally puzzling, teased from a meltdown of tropes from jazz, groove and electronic dance music thrown together into what they have aptly called 'layer caked liquid jazz'. Despite the relentless shifts and unlikely juxtapositions of electronic and acoustic sounds throughout, the results, while often playful and quirky, have a well-judged internal logic that shows a clarity of purpose behind all that hyperactivity. A track like 'LOOMY', for instance, gradually accretes sonic layers and variations to a simple, central melodic idea while restless drumming and free blowing saxophones above and below fail to dislodge it.

Similarly, sweeping harp phrases and a tight drum pulse run unperturbed through 'perla/moin' as scrabbling sax, haunting alto clarinet and keyboard outbursts loop in and out and Petter Eldh's bass guitar erupts from its disciplined underpinning. Henrik Munkeby Nørstebø's trombone provides the multi-tracked chorale to the restrained 'sol 94' while distant saxophones eventually collaborate to bring the tune to a hymn-like conclusion. It's a calm interlude quickly swept away in the sonic scattershot of 'RHUBARBS' which follows. That said, there's a conventional jazz number only slightly disguised in that track. It's all fun stuff, albeit with a veneer of purposefulness – and what it lacks in melodic variety, it more than makes up for in musical imagination.

Tony Benjamin

Soft Machine
The Dew At Dawn/(Slightly) Slightly All The Time
My Only Desire MOD007 (7" single, DL) ★★★

Theo Travis (ss, f), John Etheridge (g), Fred Thelonious Baker (el b) and Asaf Srkis (d). Rec. 19 July 2023

The second in My Only Desire's Brit Jazz 45s series – in which contemporary outfits record covers of British jazz classics on two sides of a 7-inch single – sees this latest incarnation of Soft Machine cover the great trumpeter Harry Beckett's magnificent 'The Dew At Dawn'; on the flipside there's a new recording of a Softs epic from 1970's jazz-rock classic *Third*.

Both tunes work well – 'Dew' is taken at a faster, more urgent pace than the 1975 original, and emphasises its Caribbean lilt. Fittingly, it features Backett's old bandmate Baker on bass. 'Slightly' is a highly compressed version of the 18-minute original but retains the 1970s vibe thanks to Travis' superb flute playing. A great idea well executed. **Kevin Whitlock**

Selma Savolainen

Selma Savolainen
Horror Vacui

Whirlwind Recordings WR4805
(CD, LP, DL) ★★★

Selma Savolainen (v), Tomi Nikku (t, flhn), Max Zenger (cl, other woodwind), Toomas Keski-Säntti (p), Eero Tikkanen (b) and Okko Saastamoinen (d). Rec. August 9-10 2021

The Latin title part-quotes Aristotle's notion that "nature abhors a vacuum", a suggestive phrase which helps Finnish singer-composer Selma Savolainen to explore music's need to fill silence, and the period when her promising career tumbled into pandemic emptiness. That limbo saw internal dialogues with her late dad, the noted jazz pianist-composer Jarmo Savolainen (who recorded with Billy Hart and Dave Liebman). Delayed mourning and its resolution therefore inform this second album.

Savolainen grew up backstage at jazz gigs and in her dancer mother's theatrical dressing-rooms, and *Horror Vacui* touches on Weimar-style cabaret drama as much as jazz-singing, as well as the fracturing extremes of grunge and Bjork's early vaulting between girlish delicacy and explosive climax. The mid-album 'Intro''s 88-second symphonic shimmer confirms that, as Savolainen told *Finnish Music Quarterly*, "everything I have ever heard is a horizon of possibilities".

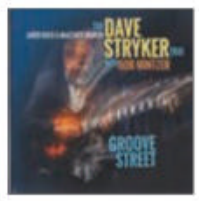
Opener 'Intense Ways to Recover' starts with a vocal sigh over lonesome clarinet, and seems to rehearse that parental reunion; "I'm haunted by a dead man," she adds on 'Haunted'. The most seemingly traditional track here, a Jazz Age near-pastiche of Kurt Weill's 'Speak Low', centres on Tomi Nikku's expressly Beiderbecke-style solo, but secretes the album's darkest lines, as time runs out on its lovers. "We're late, darling we're late," she sings, death stalking their tryst. "Everything ends too soon..."

Billy Strayhorn's 'A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing' sees Savolainen vocally step across a spare wasteland, musical emptiness imminent as piano, bass and drums pace a supportive half-step behind, till she rips into a jazz singer's rasp. 'Days of Suffering' is a working musician's confession of wear Jarmo surely felt too. Savolainen's vocal fades into the ether, then the closing 'Fear of the Empty' lets go of lyrics. Impolite extremes sometimes obscure emotional potency, but Savolainen's omnivorous style is bracing. **Nick Hasted**

The Dave Stryker Trio with Bob Mintzer
Groove Street

Strikezone 8826 (CD, DL) ★★★

Dave Stryker (el g), Jared Gold (org), McClenty Hunter (d) with Bob Mintzer (ts). Rec. July 2023



Mintzer and Stryker may sound like a pair of bully dogs, but they are long time pals, with Stryker first clocking the sax man when he was with Buddy Rich. They've collaborated in performance, but this is their first recording together, with all new music at that.

It was done old school: in and out of the studio in half a day, with first takes mainly making the final cut. The result is fresh, powerful and, to quote Mintzer's composition that climaxes this solid release, 'Straight Ahead'.

Mintzer is mainly known for his Yellowjackets association, but on this groove-driven blowing session he can get low down and post bop tuf in a relaxed context.

The few covers say plenty about the album's tone: Eddie Harris' 'Cold Duck Time' is a funked-up groover, but Mintzer takes it down in tribute to his beloved Wayne Shorter on 'Infant Eyes'. Stryker evidently has a ball with his pal alongside him, never showboating, but fleet fingered and bop fluent throughout. They don't make 'em like this often, so make the most of it! **Andy Robson**

Steve Swell Matthew Shipp
Space Cube Jazz

Rogueart ROG133 (CD, DL) ★★★★

Steve Swell (tb) and Matthew Shipp (p). Rec. 2021

A meeting of two of the seminal American musicians on French label Rogueart. Trombonist Steve Swell and pianist Matthew Shipp have long illustrious histories with a previous overlap – both worked with producer El-P some 20 years ago – but here they sound very bonded, as the best players can when they home into one each other's world and work out a shared language.

Almost a century ago Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines made astounding brass-keyboard music and although it may seem fanciful to compare their 'classic jazz' to two enduring heroes of the avant-garde an obvious and undeniable link between them is a sense of playfulness as well as mystery and imagination. It is significant that Shipp and Swell are used to lengthy if not marathon performances but opt for brevity over a dozen tracks with an average duration of 3'30".

Enormous knowledge is offset by astute self-editing. Sonically

Trio HLK
Anthropometricks

Ubuntu UBU0152 (CD, LP) ★★★★ EDITOR'S CHOICE

Rich Harrold (p, syn), Ant Law (8 -string g), Rich Kass (d, perc) with Evelyn Glennie (vb, mba, perc), Natalie Clein (clo) and Varijashree Venugopal (v). Rec. 4-9 January 2023

Anthropometricks applies the same process that Trio HLK employed on their debut *Standard Time*. Shards of standards are slivered from the original then patterned and played around with (in every sense) to create a fresh newness. So 'Concertinas (for Bill)' may have bubbled free from 'All Blues' and be a backhanded compliment to Bill Evans, while 'Flanagan's Lament' may allude to Tommy Flanagan chasing the 'Trane across 'Giant Steps'.

But whatever the entry point, the outcome is music of stunning energy, breath-taking virtuosity and rather surreally, great humour and wit. Because for all the technical jiggery pokery, all those me-tricks, the trio have a self-awareness and sense of fun that stops them disappearing up their own arch.

It also helps to have such wondrous guests. HLK's rhythmic splittings lend themselves to Carnatic sub-divisions and Venugopal's whirling vox fits snugly with HLK's *modus operandum*.

Law somehow somersaults along to follow her lines and throws in some 8-string gymnastics of his own. And when in doubt he smacks down with Fripp-like industrial sized chords. The album's only frustration is that there is not more of Venugopal. Clein's cello likewise leaves you wanting more, Harrold's lyrical piano matching her swoonsome theme as all heaven breaks loose on 'Concertinas'.

There is, though, plenty of Glennie, whose glistening percussion fairy dusts through most of the songs, while her marimba is the perfect foil to Law's effusions on the big shout finish of 'Stella'. **Andy Robson**

that means a lot of space, both in the sense of room for manoeuvre and the place where you meet Sun Ra, for when Swell makes his ballooning low notes float on the steely hammerings of Shipp's rhythm the result is an oddity fit for a miniature arkestra. Elsewhere the duo's negotiation of slowness, as if they wanted quarter note swing to be static in mid-air, as well as their teasing dynamics, which take them back and forth between minute and mass of sound, hold the interest. 'Dark Matter', a minor blues gone deliciously weird, is a highpoint in this respect. Superior duo music, then. Two kindred spirits tune into one another and capture frequencies from far and wide. **Kevin Le Gendre**

The Clark Tracey Quintet featuring Emily Masser

Introducing Emily Masser

Strayhorn Records SHR002 (CD, DL)

★★★

Clark Tracey (d), Alex Clarke (s, f), Graham Harvey (p), James Owston (b) and Emily Masser (v). Rec. date not stated

Tracey needs no introduction here: among his many strengths is his eye for new talent. This time it's the vocals of 20-year-old Guildhall student Emily Masser. Masser makes her mark immediately skydiving into a hard swinging vocalisation on the opening 'A Bitta Bittadose'. She hits the highs easefully, but equally when the tempos taken down her scat is rich, timely and never without a smile. Tracey of course is very at home in this Art Blakey bop mode and provides the perfect backdrop for Masser to fly.

The same goes for a stand-out 'The Man I Love', wittily arranged and with Masser happily unabashed to take her own route through a classic covered by all the greats. Masser has something of Annie Ross' articulation, and if she hasn't yet got the emotional gravitas for the likes of 'Then I'll Be Tired of You', these are yet early days.

Masser is not the only bright young thing on display: Clarke's sax is fluid and fluent throughout, singing on the swinging 'So Near, So Far' or joyously twinning Masser on 'Suddenly Last Tuesday'. The future's in good hands, thanks to the safe ones of Tracey. **Andy Robson**

Album Interview

Lizz Wright

Shadow

Blues & Greens Records 69450889 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★★

Lizz Wright (v), plus various personnel including Adam Levy, Chris Bruce (g), Glenn Patscha (kys), Kenny Banks Sr. (org), Deantoni Parks (d) and Abe Rounds (perc). Rec. 2023

Celebrating 20 years since her debut *Salt*, released on Verve Records in 2003, *Shadow* represents vocalist and songwriter Lizz Wright's studio debut on her own label, Blues & Greens Records. Recorded by Ryan Freeland and produced by long-time collaborator Chris Bruce, this profoundly beautiful new chapter in Wright's musical journey features five originals plus six covers. The latter include Toshi Reagon's 'No More Will I Run' which first appeared on Wright's 2022 live album, *Holding Space*.

Substituting subtle percussion for full drum kit, it seems to breathe here in an entirely different way, elevating an already gorgeous song to greatness. In addition to the vast open spaces of Caitlin Canty's 'Lost In The Valley' which features the wonderfully expressive playing of violinists Trina Basu and Arun Ramamurhy, Wright delivers one of the finest interpretations imaginable of Sandy Denny's 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes?'.

Originals include 'Sparrow', in which Wright is joined by her great friend Angélique Kidjo, the serenely hymnic 'This Way', plus a wondrous take on one of Wright's favourite standards, 'I Concentrate on You', arranged by Adam Levy. Underpinned by a deliciously fluid groove supplied by bassist Meshell Ndegeocello and drummer Deantoni Parks, with ear-catching contrapuntal detail courtesy of harpist Brandee Younger, 'Your Love' captures the essence of channelling movement to confront and heal the sorrow of lost loved ones. Transporting Wright to her grandmother's favourite oak tree along a dirt road in Georgia, 'Root of Mercy' hits the heart and soul with a balsamaceous blast of grandmaternal love. **Peter Quinn**

Peter Quinn speaks to Lizz Wright...

The album is described as a reflection on grief and love following the loss of your beloved grandmother, Martha. How has this emotional journey influenced the overall atmosphere of Shadow?

Now that I have truly experienced full-on grief, I have found I am really standing and watching the bones of my identity change, because she's one of my bones for sure. She was so special – and I don't know if she realised it, but she taught me what fearlessness is really about. I feel more sense of honour and gratitude than I expected in such a place of grief. This cavity will be filled with music, it will be filled with love, and I will really try to stand in her love shadow and do something meaningful every day when no one's looking. I'm going to try.

How did the image of the oak tree shape the emotional depth of 'Root of Mercy'?

It's incredibly hard to write a song about something so dear. 'Root of Mercy' comes from my childhood, hearing stories about my grandmother.

I'd never witnessed her actually praying in front of the tree down the road, but I used to go visit her. My dad spent a lot of time in my childhood reading stories to me. He read the plays of Shakespeare, Uncle Remus stories and all kinds of incredible lore. So her house was always an enchanted place to me. It was a long, beautiful dirt road with a lattice of shadows from the big trees and this kind of fungi that looked like an old lady's hair. And you can smell the swamp which is also close by and there's this long driveway which looks like the entrance to a kingdom that would lead to her house.

I will miss that world and I'm thankful that I have a way to repaint it so I can stare at some piece of it a little bit longer.

Why did you feel* Shadow *was the right place to include Sandy Denny's 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes?'

That Sandy Denny song is so beautifully written, nothing's overdone. It really could have brought life and right timing to anything. I remember when Joe Henry introduced me to the song, I was like, 'Why would I sing that? I'm still young!' But there is something delicious and courageous too about being with pain and pulling the strings of it apart like pieces of lace.

This is the first studio album on your own label. How did this new-found musical freedom impact* Shadow*?

So much of the freedom that I enjoy and embrace on this record is centred around my friendship with Chris Bruce. I just thought it's time for us to take this in hand and see what we can do. Lots of broken pieces of courage have made this trail that leads to me having a label.

We are all trying in our different ways, for different reasons, to participate in giving life and place to these beautiful elements of culture and of time in our record keeping.

Photo by Tony Smith

Joe Webb
Collblanc

Edition Records EDN1238 (7" EP, DL)

★★★★

Joe Webb (p), Will Sach (b) and Sam Jesson (d).
Rec. 25-26 July 2023

A quick Google reveals that Collblanc is a suburb of Barcelona: *qué significa? No importa*: the main point of interest about this five-track EP - released on seven-inch magenta coloured vinyl, no less - is that it features pianist Joe Webb's new trio. It also heralds the arrival of a new album later in the year. So there's plenty to look forward to.

Always inspired by the pianists of the 1940s and 50s, Webb has also long declared his deep affinity for the guitar bands of the 1990s. But while the echoes of Monk, Fats Waller and Oscar Peterson are obvious, those of Britpop are perhaps more evident in the attitude shown on tracks like 'CCTV' (recalling , with its percussive descending bassline, the late, lamented rock band Hard-Fi).

There's some exuberant Monk-style stride piano on 'Munchin' in Munchen', as well as more reflective moments on the dawdling solo piano piece 'Silently' and on the title track. The latter, with its insistent drone backing and slow, chiming waltz-time melody, is reminiscent of Fergus McCreadie's recent work.

Collblanc does not suggest a major new departure for Webb, but this music does more than simply recall the past, instead fusing the techniques of the old masters with a lot of good ideas from the present. **Peter Jones**

Amanda Whiting
The Liminality of Her

First Word Records/Bandcamp (LP/DL)

★★★

Amanda Whiting (hp), Aidan Thorne (b), Jon Reynolds (d), Mark O'Connor (perc), Chip Wickham (f) and PEACH. (v).
Rec. date not stated

The Liminality of Her is the third album by increasingly prolific Welsh harpist Amanda Whiting, following on from her Jazzman Records releases *After Dark* (2021) and *Lost in Abstraction* (2022).

The rhythm section, a common thread throughout her discography, consists of a tight unit of seasoned musicians from the Welsh jazz scene, with Aidan Thorne on bass, Jon Reynolds on drums, and Mark O'Connor on percussion.

In accordance with the album title, Whiting demonstrates how her instrument can be both percussive and rhythmic as well as enchantingly fluid. In tracks like 'Liminal' and 'No Turning Back', she is one with the rhythm section, hammering out deep bass grooves and chord hits. On 'Waiting To Go', the harpist leans more into the spiritual jazz roots of her instrument, sending out cascades of arpeggios beneath the melodious reflections of long-time collaborator Chip Wickham on flute.

The single 'Intertwined', released ahead of the album and featuring the dreamy vocals of PEACH., is a somewhat unconventional blend of Debussy-like swells and nu-jazz energy, identifying Whiting as a jazz musician who is marking her place in the harp canon. **Gail Tasker**

Joe Webb Trio

Shortcuts: New Releases

Tom Berkmann
Journey

Whirlwind Recordings ★★★

This young German bassist brings both maturity and exemplary technique as player/leader on his debut for Whirlwind. This seasoned sound comes through on the (overly long) opener 'Cedar', with thoughtful solos throughout from Berkmann, tenorist Ben Kraef and guitarist Carl Morgan, while drummer Simon Seidl provides satisfying pushes and punctuations. This is slick yet substantial NYC-style jazz from a band of promising players, with Berkmann a name to watch. **(MF)**

Maddison Carter
Polymorphic

Earshift Music ★★★

Talented Melbourne-based percussionist and multi-instrumentalist Carter's latest project, inspired by two years of Covid lockdowns, is a defiant call for creative freedom. The infectiously groovy 'Horse Meat' is but one standout on a joyous album which has enough angularity to keep things interesting. **(KW)**

The Jazz Defenders
Memory in Motion

Haggis Horns Records ★★★

If you're going to go retro then do it well, and listening to the pin-sharp grooves, pristine soloing and savvy recreation of that classic funky Blue Note groove vibe, you're in safe hands with the Jazz Defenders. The imperious keyboard work of George Cooper, who delivers impressively blazing solos, and the dynamite horns of trumpeter Nick Malcolm and Jake 'Get The Blessing' McMurchie make this a must listen for fans of funky soul jazz. **(MF)**

Daniel Herskedal
A Single Sunbeam

Edition ★★★★

Norwegian tuba player Herskedal has a reputation for stretching the instrument far beyond its 'oom-pah' brass band origins, taking it to a wholly new dimension here (and playing bass trumpet too) on some expansive, spellbinding sounds. Joined by Marja Mortensson on vocals, Ola Kvernberg on strings and electronics, and Helge Andreas Norbakken on drums, *A Single Sunbeam* is the sonic equivalent of watching a sun rise over a snowy mountain range: beautiful. **(MF)**

Kalaha
Nord Havn

April Records ★★★

This Danish quartet are known for their eclectic approach to jazz and on their sixth album they pay tribute to the old industrial heart of Copenhagen. The result is an energetic mix of synth, field recordings, acid jazz-rock, dub and Indian drones, wrapped up in an immersive production. It doesn't always work, but when it does, it makes for an intriguing listen. **(KW)**

Janek van Laak
Circle of Madness

Sonar Kollektiv ★★

Berlin based drummer, composer and producer van Laak is bursting with ideas on his debut, but it's the disparate multi-genre direction of each track that makes this avant jazz odyssey a frustrating listen. There are coherent passages that show the leader can write and the band can play, yet overall, the trippy psyche-rock jams, hippie vocals and knowingly shambling vibe is less than the sum of its parts. **(MF)**

Richard Nelson
Dissolve

Adhyâropa Records ★★★★

Together with his 14-piece Makrokosmos Orchestra, guitarist-composer-conductor Nelson offers up three lengthy tracks, all bursting with energy, ideas and dynamism. Big band sonics taken to the 23rd century: splendid stuff. **(KW)**

The Pulitzers
Honk Honk

Zip Records ★★★

The retro theme – much like the Jazz Defenders – continues here with a blast of feelgood Hammond jazz from these Dutch doyens of groove. This is dirty, funky stuff straight out of the Meters, Jimmy McGriff and Booker T playbooks, nothing revolutionary, but with Hammond and guitar locking tight, it's hard not to move to these grooves. **(MF)**

Simon Spiess Quiet Tree
Euphorbia

Intakt ★★★

Spiess on sax, backed by Marc Méan (keys, effects) and Jonas Ruther (drums, piano) build a spacious, thoughtful sound world on this quirky, chillout jazz album. **(KW)**

Adrien Varachaud Quartet
Time To See The Light Jazz

Family ★★★

An amiable collection of originals and standards from French soprano saxophonist Varachaud, whose group includes that excellent pianist/flautist Kirk Lightsey. Archie Shepp guests on two tracks, contributing vocals. **(KW)**

Yes! Trio
Spring Sings

Jazz & People ★★★

This threesome (Ali Jackson, drums,Aaron Goldberg, piano and Omer Avital, bass) use their diverse influences and heritages – swing, Latin, Moroccan, Jewish – to create an ear-catching collection that's an unexpected pleasure. **(KW)**

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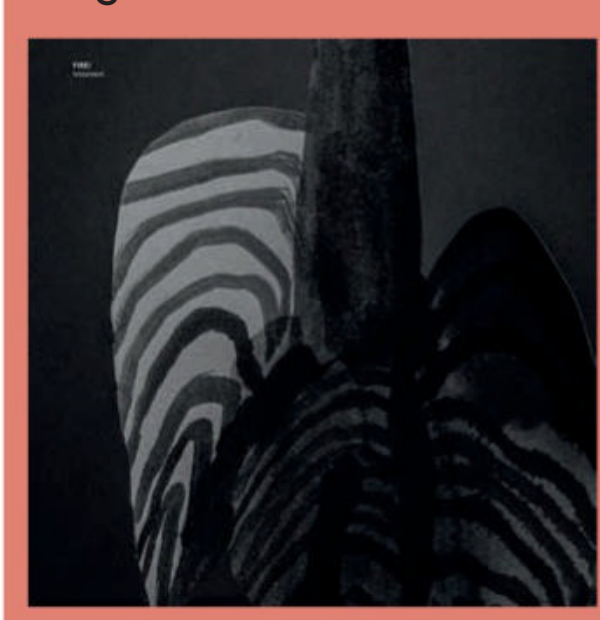

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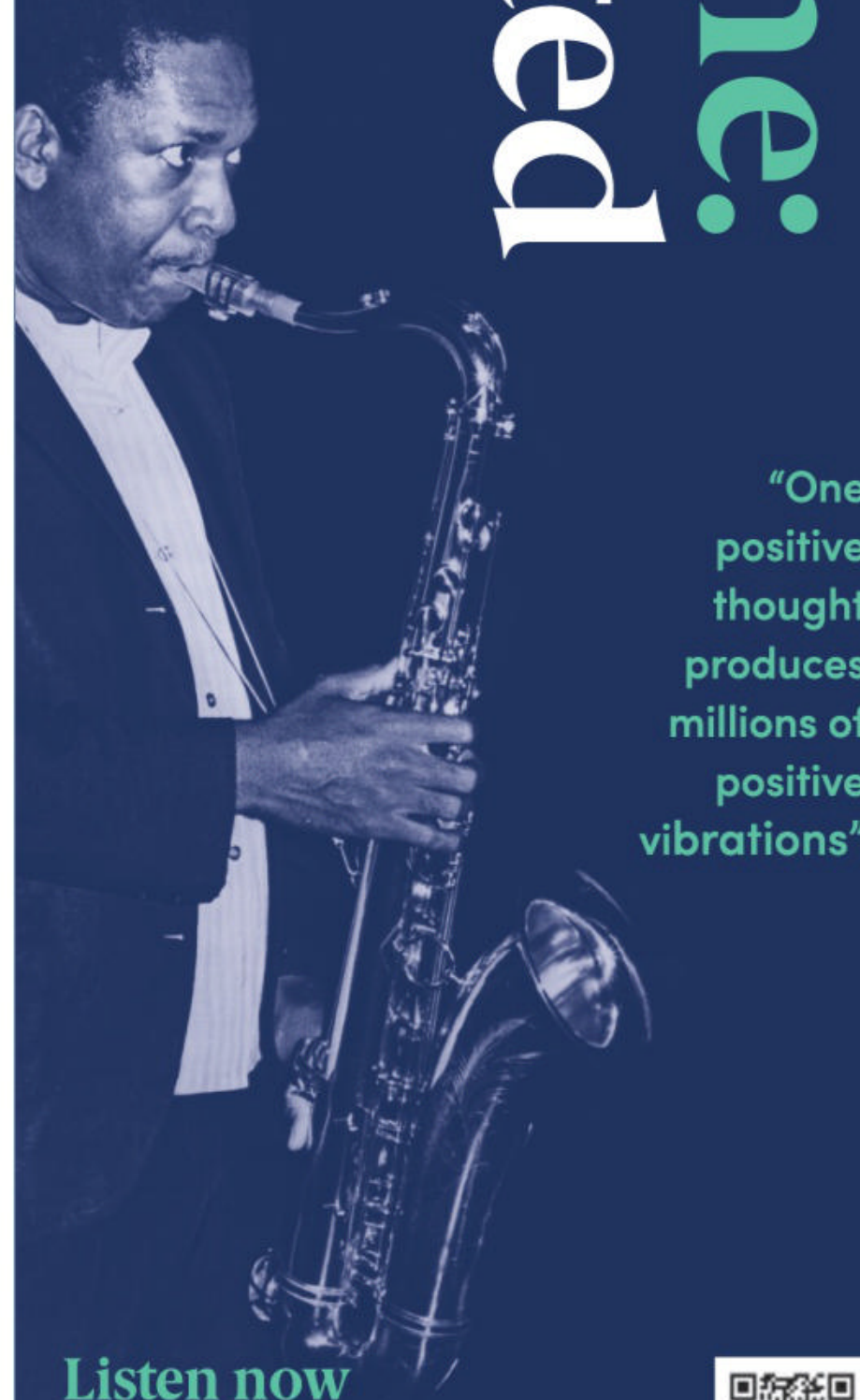

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Albums: Reissues/Archive

★★★★★ Landmark Recording ★★★★ Excellent ★★★ Good ★★ Average ★ Disappointing

Bruford
One of a Kind

Winterfold Records/Cherry Red
BBWF 004 (LP) ★★★★

Bill Bruford (d), Allan Holdsworth (g), Dave Stewart (ky) and Jeff Berlin (b). Rec. 1979

At what point does Jazz-Rock become Jazz-Rock Fusion or even that word dreaded by all jazz fans, Fusion? This album straddles all three, but in a way that does not imply sell-out, cop-out, or dumbing down. In other words, there comes a point where pigeonholing Bruford is not helpful since the integrity of the product on offer is powerful, accomplished, rock based electronic music that can be comfortably labelled 'For Enjoyment Only.'

The band emerged in 1979 as a breakaway element of UK, formed in 1977 by bassist John Wetton and Bill Bruford, the former heartbeat of King Crimson. When Holdsworth and Bruford left to do their own thing, *One of a Kind* was the band's second recording, originally on EG Records, and re-released on Bruford's own label, remixed by Jakko Jakszyk.

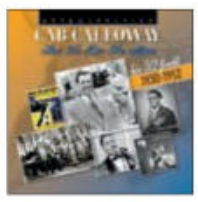
It holds up well with the passage of time, although the Yamaha synth sound, new at the time but suddenly ubiquitous in the 1980s, does need to be heard in the context of the music's time. Bruford presides over a very able rhythm section, the drummer hugely under appreciated in jazz circles, while Jeff Berlin's role is not to be understated as it was his spell in this short lived group that gave his career an upwards step change. Holdsworth, as ever, displays his impressive guitar technique that some complain is one dimensional, but here is what the music demands.

A shame this group appeared at the end of the rock influenced era in jazz, short lived though it was – there is enough here to suggest it could have made a more significant mark on the ledger six years earlier. **Stuart Nicholson**

Cab Calloway
The Hi-De-Ho Man 1930-1952

Retrospective RTS 4414 (2 CD) ★★★★

Cab Calloway (v), with R Q Dickerson, Lammar Wright, Reuben Reeves, Doc Cheatham, Ed Swayzee, Mouse Randolph, Shad Collins, Mario Bauza, Dizzy Gillespie, Jonah Jones, Russell Smith, Paul Webster, Roger Jones, Ed Mullins, Johnny Letman (t), DePriest Wheeler, Harry White, Claude Jones, Keg Johnson, Quentin Jackson, Tyree Glenn, Fred Robinson, James Buxton, Earl Hardy (tb), Thornton Blue, Arville Harris, Andy Brown, Foots Thomas, Eddie Barefield, Garvin Bushell, Ben Webster, Chauncey Haughton, Chu Berry, Jerry Blake, Teddy McRae, Hilton Jefferson, Al Gibson, Greely Walton, Ike Quebec, Bob Dorsey, Rudy Powell, Sam 'The Man' Taylor (reeds), Earres Prince, Bennie Payne, Dave Rivera (p), Morris White, Danny Barker, John Smith (bj, g), Jimmy Smith, Al Morgan, Milt Hinton (b), Leroy Maxey, Cozy Cole, J. C. Heard, Buford Oliver, Panama Francis (d), the Palmer Brothers (v), RIAS Light Orchestra and Chorus, cond. Alexander Smallens. Rec. July 1930-1952



Two years after the Acrobat Calloway collection (reviewed in *Jazzwise*, July 2022), along comes another 2-CD set, that somehow squeezes in 52 tracks. And whereas the earlier album overlooked some of the band's musical gems (notably those instrumentals on which Cab did not appear) there's a good cross section of these here, featuring – among others - Eddie Barefield ('Moonglow'), Cozy Cole ('Ratamacue'), Milt Hinton ('Pluckin' The Bass'), Chu Berry ('Ghost of a Chance') and Dizzy Gillespie (composer and arranger of 'Pickin' The Cabbage').

That said, the combination of Cab and his band over 16 years is a potent one. (The final 1952 track is not by his band, but a live German recording of his performance as the character Sportin' Life in the European tour of *Porgy and Bess*.)

We have his vocal gymnastics on 'St. Louis Blues', the band's virtuoso handling of the quick tempo on 'Some of These Days', and both elements coming together on 'Come on with the Come On', with its polysyllabic scatting prefiguring Jon Hendricks. Styles changed a lot in the big band world between the early 1930s and late 40s, but the Calloway band kept abreast of the fashions, and so in between their own distinctive brand of hep and jive songs, they covered everything from Ellingtonia such as 'Take the A-Train', Goodman repertoire, including 'A Smo-o-oth One', and proto R&B, such as Joe Liggins' 'Honeydripper'. Yet in every case, although nodding in the direction of the original, it is unmistakably Calloway's band. With excellent, informative notes from Digby Fairweather, and first-rate track selection by Ray Crick, not to mention Martin Haskell's skillful re-mastering, if you have no Calloway, this is the anthology to get hold of. **Alyn Shipton**

Cab Calloway

Alice Coltrane
The Carnegie Hall Concert

Impulse! 5882868/9 (2 CD, 2 LP, DL)
★★★★ RECOMMENDED

Alice Coltrane (hp, p), Pharoah Sanders (ts, ss, f, fife, perc), Archie Shepp (ts, ss, perc), Cecil McBee, Jimmy Garrison (b), Clifford Jarvis, Ed Blackwell (d), Kumar Kramer (harmonium) and Tulsi (tamboura). Rec. 21 February 1971

On 21 February 1971, Alice Coltrane took to the stage at New York's Carnegie Hall as part of a benefit concert performance to raise funds for the Integral Yoga Institute, an enterprise that was run by her (since disgraced) Indian guru teacher Swami Satchidananda – after whom her *Journey In Satchidananda* album, released the same year, was dedicated. The group comprised a stellar cast of jazz musicians who had previously played on sessions with Alice and her late husband John, plus two of Satchidananda's circle on harmonium and tamboura.

As this noble two-disc release clearly testifies, this was a special, almost sacred, evening for both the audience and the players involved. For Alice Coltrane, who had long been in mourning after the death of her husband in 1967, this was her opportunity to make a fresh start and show the world that she was an equally creative artist and musician.

The atmosphere throughout the first record in the set is one of spiritual bliss where Coltrane's harp is the principal instrument, as she lets loose shimmering waves of ethereal notes while the rest of the group respectfully merge together and take part. Guided along by a loping bass and drum beat, Pharoah Sanders' roaming flute and Archie Shepp's distant soprano sax flurries, the opening 'Journey Into Satchidananda' is quietly meditative, while the more lively 'Shiva-Loka' (both from her aforementioned album) has Sanders and Shepp blowing harder over bass, drums and Coltrane's ecstatic swirling harp formations.

Disc two is formed of two John Coltrane compositions from his 1961 *Africa/Brass* and 1966 *Infinity* periods, with Alice shifting from harp to piano. On both 'Africa' and 'Leo' the spiritual flow of the previous set is replaced with a harder-edged jazz vibe, as both horn players switch from their sultry sopranos to more raw sounding tenor outbursts – replete with involved solos from drummers Ed Blackwell and, on 'Leo', Clifford Jarvis. Both tracks act as a fitting and honourable tribute to John Coltrane and are given a suitably receptive roar of approval from the audience.

Further illuminated with detailed explanatory sleevenotes from writer Lauren Du Graf and a personalised memoir of the performance by former Impulse! Records house producer Ed Michel, *Live At Carnegie Hall* expertly succeeds in bringing this important episode in Alice Coltrane's musical ascension vividly back to life – to the point where you might possibly believe you were there on that magical evening. **Edwin Pouncey**

Roberta Flack
Lost Takes

ARC Records ARC004LP (2 LP, DL)

★★★★ RECOMMENDED

Roberta Flack (p, v), Marshall Hawkins (b) and Bernard Sweetney (d). Rec. November 1968

Best known these days as a soul chanteuse, a peerless purveyor of ballads such as 'First Time Ever I Saw Your Face' and 'Killing Me Softly' (not to mention her majestic collaborations with Donny Hathaway), Flack began her career demonstrating serious jazz chops. From the opening track – a superb cover of 'Compared To What' – of her 1968 debut *First Take*, listeners were introduced to an impressive and hugely promising pianistic/vocal talent. If you enjoyed that album, you'll love *Lost Takes*, which collects demo tracks recorded with Marshall Hawkins and Bernard Sweetney before that album's release; these tunes first appeared (on CD and streaming only) on the 'deluxe' edition of *First Take*. Here they're presented – with stunning sound on two 45rpm discs.

Highlight of the set is the 10-minute 'Afro Blue': Flack's debt – pianistically and vocally – to Nina Simone is clear, but she's very much her own woman. Her voice simply soars; as Les McCann, who discovered her singing in a Washington, DC nightclub said: "Her voice touched and kicked every emotion I've ever known."

Her playing is just as good, full of celestial passion but tempered by a virtuosic skill and control remarkable for a 21-year-old. Other head-turners include a soulful, slow-burning 'Frankie and Johnny' and a beauteous 'The House Song'.

McCann, and later Atlantic Records, who signed Flack on his recommendation, saw her artistic and commercial potential. The upbeat show tunes ('On the Street Where You Live', 'This Could Be the Start of Something') and straightahead ballads (a striking 'To Sir With Love') demonstrate her interprative skills, but also her marketability to a 1970s jazz-soul crossover audience. *Lost Takes* straddles that genre divide perfectly, and it's a total knockout. **Kevin Whitlock**

Dexter Gordon
Daddy Plays The Horn

Bethlehem/Pure Pleasure BCP-36 (LP)

★★★★★

Dexter Gordon (ts), Kenny Drew (p), Leroy Vinnegar (b) and Larry Marable (d). Rec. September 1955

In a perfect world, had things not gone all possession, penitentiary and parole boards, the 1950s could have been Dexter Gordon's decade. The great swing-to-bop tenorman already had a clutch of well-loved 78rpms to his name on the Savoy and Dial labels, including the defining 'The Chase' shared with fellow West Coast trailblazer Wardell Gray, and his style had helped shape those of young contenders like Sonny Rollins, but sadly the dawn of the 12" LP era granted him just two opportunities before arrest and conviction once more curtailed his career; this album and the similarly iconic *Blows Hot and Cool* on the Dootone label, both cut in 1955.

Daddy Plays The Horn is the best of this brace, mainly because Long Tall Dexter gets to stretch his musical limbs minus a front-line partner. The result is a classic, every perpendicular inch the equal of those famed Blue Notes from the following decade.

Another reason for the album's success is its rhythm section – three transplanted beboppers then finding California an attractive alternative to the Big Apple. And there's the recorded sound – bright, open, less 'produced' than its allegedly superior East Coast alternative. Howard Stabin's now-iconic sleeve art helps too.

Yet for all this – Drew's Powellesque lines, the airy audio, the cool cartoon cover – the real action is with Dexter himself, languid and Lester-like on the title track, showing his bop chops on 'Confirmation', and on 'Darn That Dream' and 'Autumn In New York' offering up two drawn out ballad readings full of his characteristic slow-motion lyricism. If Gordon had been around to offer more of this sort of thing in the latter half of the 1950s his would have been an interesting counterweight to the emerging Coltrane school. History however, had the last laugh; in his absence Coltrane drew heavily on the older man's message in formulating his own approach, in effect creating a proxy line of succession.

If you only know Dexter from his 1960s output, *Round Midnight* or that ubiquitous noirish Herman Leonard photograph, check this out. Serious music in a comic cover, this LP is a faithful facsimile of the real deal. **Simon Spillett**

Alice Coltrane with Swami Satchidananda, Rishikesh, India 1971

Photo: courtesy Integral Yoga® Archives

Joe Henderson
Power To The People

Milestone/Jazz Dispensary Top Shelf Series CR00655 (LP, DL)

★★★★ RECOMMENDED

Joe Henderson (ts), Mike Lawrence (t), Herbie Hancock (p, el p), Ron Carter (b, el b) and Jack DeJohnette (d). Rec. May 1969

If Hard Bop musicians wanted to loosen their tie in the late 1960s there were three popular ways of doing so; first, they could go all funky and get back in touch with the urban roots of the music (think Lee Morgan); secondly they might head steadily towards the avant-garde or, if so motivated, begin to cover Bacharach and Motown. All this was nothing new to tenorist Joe Henderson, who by the middle of the decade had proven his worth in settings ranging from down-home R&B to the trickiest of post-bop.

The year before this album was cut – Henderson's third session for the Milestone after quitting Blue Note – the saxophonist had declared himself in one interview to be a 'moderate' player, an assessment that was as accurate as it was modest. Indeed, at a time when many of his tenor playing colleagues were floundering in the great post-Trane freak-out, Henderson was making great music full of melody, careful musicianship and craft, taking only the bits of the new wave he could pattern as he wished.

Witness *Power To The People*, an album the contents of which don't quite match the polemic marketing. True, Henderson plays as 'out' as he ever did on the title track, and has a truly ear-grabbing free outburst in the closing 'Foresight and Afterthought', but elsewhere this is highly considered almost introspective stuff.

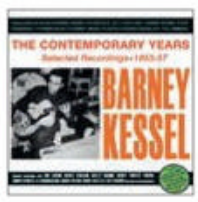
There's a shimmering reading of a Broadway ballad in 'Lazy Afternoon', and two lyrical originals in 'Opus One-Point-Five' and, making its debut here, the waltzing 'Black Narcissus' (later lyricised by the much missed Tina May), all a far cry from the sort of free-for-all blow-out the title might suggest. Along with the leader's gripping playing – its gravitas close to Rollinsesque in places – there's a starry Miles-made rhythm section and the obscure but very-far-from-overshadowed Lawrence, one of jazz brass's great 'what ifs' who was to die young leaving virtually his whole recorded legacy in the company of Henderson.

A record then of considerable subtlety rather than the politicised punch promised on the cover. It sounds astonishing in this Kevin Gray-cut new pressing too, which comes complete with a luxuriously heavy gatefold sleeve and a lovely period sleeve note. In fact, if you only know Joe from those mellow latter-day Verve projects, this is a great place to dip into his past. Most highly recommended. **Simon Spillett**

Barney Kessel
The Contemporary Years – Selected Recordings 1953-57

Acrobat ADDCD3492 (2CD) ★★★★

Collective personnel: Barney Kesssel, Al Hendrickson (g), Harry Edison (t), George Smith (cl), Howard Smith (cl, b-cl, bassoon), Justin Gordon (cl, b-cl), Bud Shank, Ted Nash (as,f), Buddy Collette (as, f, alto-f, cl), Junie Cobb (oboe, eng-hrn), Bob Cooper (ts, oboe), Bill Perkins, Georgie Auld (ts), Arnold Ross, Claude Williamson, Jimmy Rowles, Hampton Hawes, Andre Previn (p), Harry Babasin, Monty Budwig, Red Mitchell, Buddy Clark, Ray Brown (b), Shelly Manne, Irv Cottler, Chuck Thompson (d). Rec. 14 November, 19 December 1953; 4 June 1954; 28 March, 26 June, 12 September 1955; 23 February, 15 October, 4 December 1956; 18-19 March 1957



Kessel's Contemporary albums have often been reissued, what with an earlier series on Original Jazz Classics, and then a pair of Avid's *Classic Albums* compilations plus their partial inclusion on the recent Jasmine double CD (reviewed in *Jazzwise* 287). In other words, and inevitably, there have been regular duplications – so be warned.

For their addition to this Kessel reissue saga, Acrobat have concentrated on a key period in Kessel's impressive discography by dipping into seven of his 'name' sessions for the LA-based Contemporary label. These started soon after he had returned from his year-long tour with Oscar Peterson's trio and established himself in the Hollywood studio scene. Although he went on to front a great many more albums, this period under Lester Koenig's patronage must be counted as easily among Kessel's best.

As John Fordham put it when describing Kessel's Contemporary records, they're "sharp and swinging" and he's right. Sharp in the sense that his sidemen choices and routines serve the material well, and swinging too, with Kessel's Christian-like lines adding valuably to the momentum here. This never better than on the justly celebrated *The Poll Winners* album from March 1957, with Kessel alongside bassist Ray Brown and drummer Shelly Manne. Earlier the septet session from *To Swing Or Not To Swing* with Sweets Edison and the Lester-like Bill Perkins with pianist Jimmy Rowles supported by Mitchell and Manne, is the epitome of straight-ahead jazz. Elsewhere, there are some interesting experiments with instrumentation viz Cooper's use of the oboe in the quintet sessions from 1954, albeit with the magical Claude Williamson on piano. So, no duds here: just a series of likeable performances by a leader at the top of his game amid a cohort of his jazz friends.

Peter Vacher

Art Pepper Quintet
Smack Up

Contemporary/Craft CR00706 (LP, DL)

★★★★ RECOMMENDED

Art Pepper (as), Jack Sheldon (t), Pete Jolly (p), Jimmy Bond (b) and Frank Butler (d). Rec. 24-25 October 1960

Craft's Contemporary reissue programme continues apace, and there is no better place to start than with this Art Pepper release from 1960. Pepper's movie star good looks, captured for the cover by the famous West Coast photographer William Claxton, would soon be eroded by drug addiction. But even then, his was not a face that bore the story of a lifetime of addiction and a thousand and one hangovers like the famously photographed face of his West Coast contemporary, Chet Baker. "They're laugh lines," Baker once quipped to fellow trumpeter Jack Sheldon, who features alongside Pepper on *Smack Up*. "Nothing in life is that funny!" retorted the arch-humourist Sheldon.

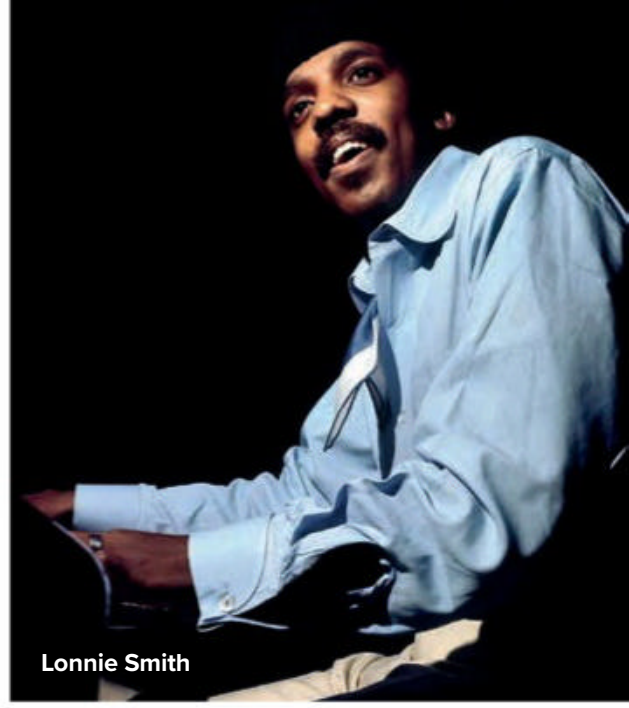
While Pepper rightly gets star billing here, seldom commented on is Sheldon's articulate and perfectly balanced contribution that maintains the music's momentum when Pepper steps away from the solo microphone.

The continuing longevity of this album – for example, a track from it was played in part on the popular Netflix series *Bosch* in an early episode of the series (Bosch, and the actor playing him, is a jazz fan who calls his dog Coltrane) – is of course down to Pepper's much documented playing here.

Recorded when West Coast jazz's time in the sun was in decline, Pepper's playing was moving away from the more fluid construction of his solos that marked him out in the context of West Coast jazz to a more epigrammatic approach, as if distilling the essence of what he had to say down to its true essence.

Craft has approached this classic release with the same assiduous attention to detail that has set the standard in vinyl reissues. The sleeve follows the same grade of stout cardboard of the original release, the cover photo captures the same degree of colour saturation of the original release and on the rear cover, the liner notes and photo and associated typography follow the original to a tee. Holding the Craft reissue in one hand and the original release in the other, it is like purchasing the original anew.

The analogue lacquers have been cut from the original master tapes by sound engineer Bernie Grundman, whose reputation in this field precedes him, and is pressed on quality vinyl. Originally, and expertly, recorded by sound engineer Roy DuNann, the source material was of remarkably good quality, so the final result is one of great clarity and balance through the whole dynamic range. Like it or not, tapes inevitably degrade, or oxidise, with age, and, as here, often results in a slightly warmer sound than the original release, as a like for like comparison reveals. This is no bad thing, although is a matter of taste I grant you, but the sheer quality of this music is in no way impeded. **Stuart Nicholson**


Lonnie Smith

Lonnie Smith
Afrodesia

Mr Bongo MRBCD/LP297 (CD, LP, DL)

★★★★

Lonnie Smith (org, ky), Compliments Of A Friend (g), Greg Hopkins (t), Joe Lovano (ts, ss), Ron Carter, Ralphe Armstrong (el b). Ben Riley (d) and Jamey Haddad (perc). Rec. 1975

Hammond organ legend Lonnie Smith made a string of essential albums between the late 1960s and mid 70s, and Afrodesia is the highlight. It is tempting to say that the cover alone, a painting of our hipster hero in tropical nirvana, is worth the retail price but that would not do justice to the music.

A bewitching blend of pyschedelic soul, funk and jazz, the songs are groove heavy and decisively enhanced by some thrilling solos and fantastically strange sounds. No better example of this can be found than the title track, which has punchy horns, sizzling keyboards, a guitar made to sound like a prehistoric bird and vocals that evoke a commanding high priest. It's as if Jimi's 'Purple Haze' had reached a Baptist church by way of a santeria ceremony. Smith is on excellent form throughout and there are a couple of delicious curveballs thrown at unsuspecting punters to boot. The mysteriously-named guitarist 'Compliments Of A Friend' is actually Smith's previous collaborator George Benson, who hid his identity for contractual reasons, and the composition 'Flavors' is John Coltrane's 'Impressions', which is given a rip roaring treatment that serves as a reminder that Smith and co can get as much improvisatory mileage from hard swing as they do a heavy backbeat. **Kevin Le Gendre**

Melvin Taylor & The Slack Band
Melvin Taylor & The Slack Band

Evidence/Pre Pleasure EVD 26073 (LP)

★★★★

Melvin Taylor (g, v), Willie Smith (el b) and Steve Potts (d). Rec. 1995

Along with Robert Cray, Melvin Taylor was one of the most significant figures to emerge in blues in the 1980s. He recorded steadily in the decade and was still on point in the 1990s, as this excellent album attests.

Although the term 'power trio' has become largely synonymous with jazz-rock, it is entirely appropriate for Taylor's work here as the three-piece he formed with bassist Willie Smith and drummer Steve Potts cranks up the excitement without, crucially, hitting too much of a frenzy. The band has control amid intensity. Taylor is a stupendous soloist who draws as much on blues heroes Albert King and Buddy Guy as he

Osmar Milito
Viagem
Continental/ Elemental 40010 (LP)

★★★★

Oscar Milito (p, el p, arr), Paulo Moura (cond), Luiz Claudio (g), Paschoal, Roberto 'Ronnie' (d), Chico Batera, Gilson, Nenê (perc), Tião Barros, Luizão Maia (b), Marcio Lott, Marilia and Fabiola, Rose (v). Rec. 1974

Tom Zé
Todos Os Olhos
Continental/ Elemental 40011 (LP)

★★★

Tom Zé (v, g, comp, lyricist), plus various uncredited musicians. Rec. 1973

The impact of the military regime in Brazil, especially in the latter half of the 1960s, was that of a dictatorship that sought to control every aspect of public life, including the arts and culture. Musicians and composers I have spoken to who were active during this time all speak of how their work was shaped to avoid being sent to prison because of the curtailment of civil rights and the arrest of intellectuals and artists across all fields of culture; and the clandestine nature of recording, which the authorities sought to curtail, or at the very least limit.

Human creativity does not cease because of the whims of authoritarianism, however, and ironically this repression resulted in a highly creative period in Brazilian culture, with the rise of Tropicala, Bossa Nova, jazz, Cinema Novo, and literature of subtle protest through allusion and double entendre. These two albums reflect the social and political context from which they emerged and are inseparable, a period of (deliberate) paucity of recording details, pseudo names, when an album's very existence was protest in itself.

By their nature, *Viagem* and *Todos Os Olhos* were extremely rare until made available by Elemental on superb 180 gram pressings and re-mastering from the original tapes. From a jazz perspective, Milito's *Viagem* comes close to agreeable middle of the road music, but from the perspective of reconstructing Brazilian jazz influenced bossa nova during the military repression and its relaxation in the 1970s (when many an artist's work existed in the space of legend, rather than reality) they command interest.

Viagem reflects the international acclaim of pianist/arranger Sergio Medes, who emigrated from Brazil to Los Angles to form the hugely popular Brazil '66, which transformed Sergio Mendes from a credible jazz pianist into international pop star with albums such as *Brasil '66*, *Equinox* and *Fool on the Hill*, complete with voices and light piano improvisation over samba or bossa nova rhythms.

Gently persuasive, *Viagem* is in a similar strand, and claimed to be a bossa nova/jazz fusion classic, which is perhaps overstating its significance, based more on Milito's reputation as a reliable and creative sidemen for the likes of Elis Regina, Gilberto Gil, Marcos Valle and Jorge Ben among others. Pleasant rather than musically memorable the hypnotic Brazilian feel does make you come back for more.

The Tom Zé album *Todos Os Olhos* comes weighed in legend: claimed to be a classic of prog rock, Brazilian avant garde (Zé was a confirmed dadaist), and a 'playful' classic from the bossa nova era, its reputation has been enhanced coming from the most repressive period of the Brazilian dictatorship that effectively resulted in Zé's removal from radio and public performance because the lyrics (in Portuguese) were deemed 'controversial'. Both minimalistic and with hints of dada-esque mischief, the album is indeed playful from a deadly serious period and closer to Brazil's folkloric heritage in parts, while 'Complexico de Epico' that clocks in at some seven minutes using voices and nylon-strung guitar gives a better perspective in which to view this complex artist. **Stuart Nicholson**

does soul-jazz titans such as Cornell Dupree and David T Walker, and his blend of easy breathing melodic fills and longer, louder explosive lines brings excellent variety to the colour palette of the music. On a song such as 'All Your Love (I Miss Loving)', Taylor cooks, combining a winsome lead vocal with tasty guitar licks that say more in just four bars than some can in 64.

Kevin Le Gendre

Leon Thomas
Full Circle
Flying Dutchman/BGP HIQLP105 (LP, DL)

★★★★

Leon Thomas (v, perc), Neal Creque (p, el p), Pee Wee Ellis (ts, ss, f), Jimmy Owens (t), Joe Beck Lloyd Davis (g), Richard Davis (el b), Sonny Morgan, Richard Landrum (perc), Bernard Purdie and Herbie Lovelle (d). Rec. 1973

An acclaimed singer in his own right, Leon Thomas is also synonymous with the music of Pharoah Sanders but it should not be forgotten that he was also a member of Santana. The connection is made explicit on one of the highlights of this set. Thomas reprises 'Just In Time To See The Sun', which was featured on the guitar hero's 1971 classic *Caravanserai* and the new rendition is excellent. Although his baritone could generate volcanic power Thomas was also a remarkably sensitive singer and his blend of light and heavy tone brings character to the gorgeously soulful melody. The same could be said of the beautiful rolling samba 'Balance Of Life (Peace Of Mind)' but the stand out cut is the deeply emotive 'It's My Life I'm Fighting For', where Thomas captures the seriousness of the lyric with a blend of intense bluesiness, deep melancholy and his trademark Pygmy chanting, over a fine interweaving of flute, trumpet, guitar and percussion. The reissue market is saturated to say the least, but this handsomely-packaged gatefold LP is well worth the investment. **Kevin Le Gendre**

Various Artists
DJ Natoya Presents Funk Tide: Tokyo Jazz Funk from Electric Bird 1978-1987
We Want Sounds WWSCD/LP81 (CD, LP, DL) ★★★

Artists include Shunzo Ohno (syn), Mikio Masuda (ky, syn), Yasuaki Shimizu (s, perc), David Matthews (ky), Toshiyuki Honda (s, f), Ronnie Foster (ky, v), Bobby Lyle Trio, Katsutoshi Morizono (g, v) featuring David Sanborn (s), Lew Soloff (t), Bobby Lyle, Kenny Kirkland (ky), Phil Upchurch (g), Mike Mainieri (vb), Marcus Miller, Anthony Jackson, Tony Levin, Stanley Clarke (b), Bernard Purdie, Harvey Mason, Alex Acuna (d), Paulinho Da Costa and Sammy Figueroa (perc). Rec. 1978-1987

Ah, it's guilty pleasure time. Japanese jazz-funk is a many-splendoured thing, with various highways and byways to get pleasantly lost among. In its curious cross over between City Pop, video game soundtracks and American funk (post Herbie in Headhunters mode) the funk tide can be anything from gloriously danceable to schmaltz central. The Electric Bird label had a direct link with American jazz funk through its mother company King Records which was licensed to release CTI and Blue Note. So no surprise that Natoya has selected material with mostly US personnel supporting Japanese stars.

The bait is the stellar guests. For example, Matthews' 'Special Delivery' showcases David Sanborn, and like most of the material here it has an easeful groove. And just look at the bass and drum credits here, a galaxy of stars drawing their session fees. It's professional, perfectly produced, but often perfectly predictable.

Like the Kiwi cricketer Bob Cunis, who John Arlott described as having "a name that was neither one thing or another", this anthology falls between the stalls of neither having the edge of American funk or the irresistible shine of Japan's own fusion.

We are in different realms from Prism or Casiopea, but that won't stop *Funk Tide* getting spun on many a baby zoomer's play list. Meanwhile, I'm diving back into Harumo Imai's seductive sax. Wouldn't you? **Andy Robson**

Yasuaki Shimizu

CRAFTING CLASSICS

Kevin Whitlock reviews a quintet of impeccable reissues on Craft Recordings from the Contemporary and OJC archives

Dave Brubeck Quartet
Jazz At Oberlin
OJC/Craft Recordings CR00612 (LP, DL) ★★★★★

Dave Brubeck (p), Paul Desmond (as), Ron Crotty (b) and Lloyd David (d). Rec. 2 March 1953

Bill Evans Trio
Sunday At The Village Vanguard
OJC/Craft Recordings CR00609 (LP, DL) ★★★★★

Bill Evans (p), Scott LaFaro (b) and Paul Motian (d). Rec. 25 June 1961

Tommy Flanagan
The Cats
OJC/Craft Recordings CR00614 (LP, DL) ★★★★

Tommy Flanagan (p), John Coltrane (ts), Idrees Sulieman (t), Kenny Burrell (g), Doug Atkins (b) and Louis Hayes (d). Rec. 18 April 1957

Three more releases in Craft's ongoing OJC reissue series, all presented in stunning stereo sound and cut in an all-analogue chain by Kevin Gray from the original master tapes, and all worthy of consideration (hi-res downloads are also available for those without turntables).

Dave Brubeck's long life and career was littered with landmarks, but his first brush with jazz greatness came in 1953, when his then record label, Fantasy, issued a live album, *Jazz at Oberlin*, which was recorded in March that year at posh Ohio liberal arts college, Oberlin, in front of a wildly appreciative crowd. It not only marked some of the earliest fruits of Brubeck's remarkable musical partnership with 29-year-old altoist Paul Desmond, it also outlined new directions for jazz; in contrast to the frantic improv of bebop, *Jazz at Oberlin* showcased Brubeck's cool, melodic and distinctly 'West Coast' approach. It also propelled the music to favour with a young, predominantly white and middle-class audience.

Brubeck's classic quartet (Desmond, Gene Wright and Joe Morello) was still some years away, but drummer Ron Crotty and bassist Lloyd Davis (who had a high fever at the time, not that you'd know) play with what *Jazzwise*'s John Fordham aptly described as "brisk empathy". The five tunes here are all covers, a jaunty 'Perdido' being a standout, while 'These Foolish Things' is almost avant-garde in its percussive piano; it's years ahead of its time and Desmond's blowing is sensational. The opening 'The Way You Look Tonight' sparkles with invention and the magnificent closer 'Stardust' sets the template for the pianist's elegant excursions he made with his classic quartet later on. Brubeck recorded many memorable live albums over the years, but very few are better than this.

Little needs to be said about the Evans album, a companion piece to *Waltz For Debby*, recorded on the same night (but released some months later). With *Debby*, it is perhaps *the* defining acoustic piano trio recording – it was placed fifth in *Jazzwise*'s *The 100 Jazz Albums That Shook The World* book – the emotive interplay between the three musicians without parallel and LaFaro establishing himself as an innovative heir to (the similarly short lived) Jimmy Blanton. If you do not have this landmark recording on vinyl (if you don't, you should!) then this Craft version can be considered definitive, especially in this jaw-dropping sound quality.

The *Cats* album, first released in 1959, is a collaboration featuring some exceptional talents who were on the verge of stardom, having previously served as sidemen for other jazz greats such as Miles, Monk, Billie and Ella.

It's an album that showcases both individual brilliance and collective ensemble synergy and which fizzes with energy from the opening 'Minor Mishap' through to the closing epic, 'Tommy's Time'. The odd-tune-out on this upbeat collection is a tender 'How Long Has This Been Going On', featuring just piano, bass and drums and which showcases Flanagan's exploratory technique and his impeccable touch; he remains a curiously under-heralded player who deserves reappraisal, something this reissue will hopefully help to do.

All three albums also feature deluxe packaging: tip-on facsimile sleeves that display commendable attention to detail, matching the sound quality.

BERNIE'S BOUNTY...

The Curtis Counce Group

You Get More Bounce With Curtis Counce!
Contemporary/Craft Recordings CR00391 (LP, DL) ★★★★

Curtis Counce (b), Jack Shelton (t), Harold Land (ts), Carl Perkins (p) and Frank Butler (d). Rec. 8 and 15 October 1956; 22 April, 13 May and 3 September 1957

Shelly Manne and His Friends

Modern Jazz Performances of Songs From My Fair Lady
Contemporary/Craft Recordings CR00391 (LP, DL) ★★★★

Shelly Manne (d), André Previn (p) and Leroy Vinnegar (b). Rec. 17 August 1956

The recordings made by engineer Roy Du Nann at the Contemporary label have justly been acclaimed for their clarity and naturalism; the company's approach to recording makes its LPs ideal for modern mastering techniques, especially when done by Du Nann's mentee, Bernie Grundman. As these two exceptional-sounding reissues demonstrate, he's as sympathetic to the original masters as ever.

Counce's album is perhaps more famous (or infamous) these days for its tongue-in-cheek title and cover, but it remains the bassist's best album. An impeccable timekeeper, Counce leads his group through a good-natured collection of rhythmically precise numbers, two by him ('Complete' and 'Counceltation', both very good) and five standards including Charlie Parker's 'Big Foot'. It falls somewhere between hard bop and West Coast cool, and is, as the title suggests great fun.

Back in *Jazzwise* 287, I reviewed Manne, Previn and Red Mitchell's 1959 trio take on *West Side Story*. This trio version of tunes from Lerner & Loewe's *My Fair Lady* works much better, I think, because the original material suits the stripped-back, elegant and slightly cerebral approach of Previn better than Bernstein's often aggressively angular Latin-tinged pieces did. The stately Broadway shimmer of 'On The Street Where You Live', 'I Could Have Danced All Night' and 'I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face' proved hugely popular with both 1950s jazzers and musicals fans. Highlight is a witty, swinging take on 'Wouldn't It Be Lovely'.

As ever, the packaging matches the sound quality, and the superb pressings mean we have two perfect facsimiles of the originals.

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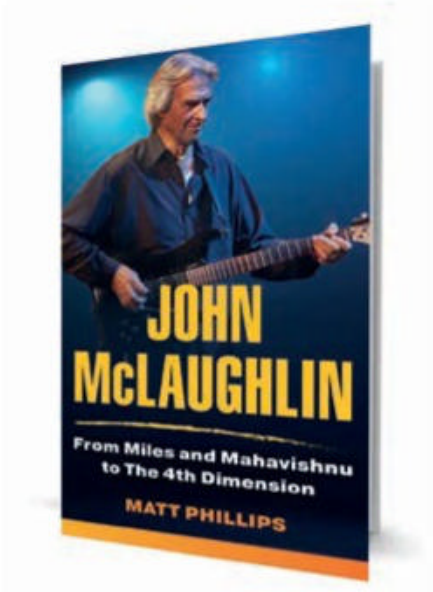


John McLaughlin: From Miles and Mahavishnu to The 4th Dimension

Matt Phillips

Rowman & Littlefield HB £30

The giveaway's in the title. Phillips very much explores the guitar hero's career from his arrival in the States and his catapulting into Miles' break-through, rock-centric albums. Of course, there are references, if cursory, about his upbringing. And many would like to know more about his time on the blues and R&B scene in Britain through the 1960s.

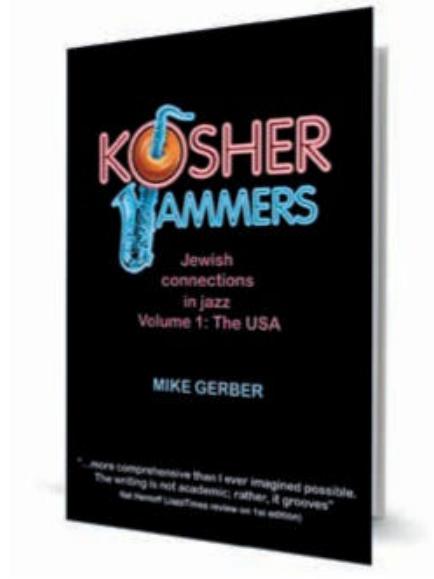
But there's nothing that give us a sense of the excitement of that scene or why the likes of Tony Williams and Miles wanted to a get a slice of their own of that explosive sound. For that you'd have to go to Colin Harper's *Bathed in Lightning*.

So, the book, worthily so, is essentially a catalogue of the albums McLaughlin generated himself or played a major part on with, initially, American stars. The impact of life on the road upon relationships, his wives, the challenge of arthritis, bust ups within bands, any insights into the man himself are named but not excavated. And, with no interviews with McLaughlin, there is a hollowness at the book's centre.

Indeed, all the reflections from colleagues appear to be cut and pastes. That said, Phillips has an easy flowing written style, which makes the dance from one resume to the next of all the albums a relatively easy read. The drawback of course is that each album is seen through Phillips' filter, and with little space for meaningful critiques (reviews generally range at a page and a bit once personnel and recording details are discounted), you may get more from looking up long form reviews online.

All of which makes Phillips' work a useful 'dip into book' (and generally, the research is good, although there will always be quibbles, questions and downright mistakes in any such tome). It's useful as a primer on McLaughlin's work in this era, and it does note the significance of the embracing of so many cultural influences, and not just Indian ones at that. So as an introduction to McLaughlin, it works well enough, especially as Phillips' enthusiasm as the keenest of fans is catching.

However, others may prefer deeper insight into the music making, while McLaughlin himself remains something of an enigma (a smiley one admittedly), but a musician happy to let his guitars do the talking. **Andy Robson**



Kosher Jammers Jewish Connections in Jazz Vol. 1: The USA

Mike Gerber

Vinyl Vanguard PB £19.99

Mike Gerber is a journalist and co-owner of Vinyl Vanguard, the Walthamstow used jazz record shop, and author of 2010's *Jazz Jews*. He has rewritten *Jazz Jews* as two separate books - *Kosher Jammers* looks at the US while the next volume will focus on Europe. It turns out to be an engaging and informative read – Gerber is interested in the role Jews have played in American jazz, both as musicians and composers and behind the scenes (managers, label owners, promoters, critics) in clear, succinct prose.

The project has preoccupied Gerber for many years and he's got interviews with several individuals no longer with us, including Artie Shaw and Newport Festival founder George Wein. George Gershwin, Red Rodney, Nica the Jazz Baroness, Leonard Feather, Red Rodney, Benny Goodman and others all appear, and are discussed at length; and Gerber is willing to highlight flaws as well as strengths. Throughout, he is interested in whether the *klezmer* music that accompanied Jewish immigrants from Russia to the US played any part in shaping jazz – it's something he discusses with musicians throughout.

This is an assured and informative book that opens up discussion on Jews in jazz while never denying the centrality of African-American artistry. If the book has any flaws, it's that the last chapter – where he interviews Zorn, Roy Nathanson and other contemporary US Jewish jazz musicians – goes on too long for this reader. And when discussing the likes of Joe Glaser, Herman Lubinsky and Morris Levy, he's gentler than history suggests their reputations deserve. **Garth Cartwright**

A Celebration of Keith Tippett

Various Artists

Pig Records Blu-ray/DL £20/£15

Though his health had long been problematic, the passing of Keith Tippett in June 2020 nonetheless shocked the worlds of jazz and improvised music. This was especially true in his Bristol hometown, where generations of musicians had benefitted from his generous support.

Lockdown constrained any public show of appreciation for this seminal musician's achievements until, in October 2021, a musical tribute was held at Bristol's St George's concert hall. Saxophonist Kevin Figes transcribed and arranged much of the programme, with 30 musicians performing improvised and composed music representing some of the many strands of Tippett's diverse career. The six performances are captured on a Blu-ray; the five-hour soundtrack is also available to download through Pig Records' Bandcamp page.

Things begin with an improvised piano duet between Matthew Bourne and Glen Leach, recalling Bourne's duo work with Tippett. From an elegiac, Debussy-recalling opening their intensely interactive music coalesces into an angry climax before resolving to a lyrical ending – almost a classic grieving process, in fact. Simply hearing the captivating performance of the *a cappella* duo of Julie Tippetts and Maggie Nichols that follows suffers from the lack of visuals: their combination of inspired vocal exploration and off-beat sisterly stand-up comedy is very much performance art, best seen on the Blu-ray.

In 'From Granite to Wind' – referencing Tippett's affiliation with exiled South African musicians – a rolling township riff and free blowing shifts through different moods. The duet between Figes' mournful alto and Jim Blomfield's piano, plus a scorching tenor solo from Ben Waghorn highlight the piece. The 1980s Dreamtime sextet is recreated here without piano and a doubled line-up. Led by original trumpeter Jim Dvorak, they relish Tippett's 'Billy Goes To Town', with Paul Dunmall's barnstorming solo. Dunmall then returns for a free improvising quartet set with Liam Noble's assertive piano capturing the spirit of Mujician, Dunmall's long-standing collaboration with Tippett. It's good to see Miles Levin (son of Mujician drummer Tony) in the ranks of the 18-strong Keith Tippett Celebration Orchestra whose 50-minute set ends this marathon. Exceptional stuff. **Tony Benjamin**

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Instrument News & Reviews

David Gallant reviews the latest instruments, books and accessories for professional and serious amateur musicians

DS Drum Seamless snare drum

Seamless snare drums are an essential part of the arsenal for many top players, and have for many years been the No.1 choice for both live and studio recording. Their unique manufacturing process improves the raw material metallurgy by realigning the grain structure and work hardening of the metal. This results in a shell with structural integrity and strength that is superior to any welded shell.

Many years of research by the Italian company have culminated in a C-Shape cross section which gives these DS drums a unique sound. The slightly conical shell with it's different bearing edges to both top and bottom, is part of the advanced design. It's fitted with the DS Drum 2.3mm inward hoops, Italian lugs and strainers and custom high carbon steel snares. Satin finished both inside and out but not plated, they come with a light coat of lacquer, which DS maintains will keep their good looks for many years (if cased!).

We decided to take a look at the Copper shell version as opposed to the Brass and Aluminium options. It is immediately apparent that the build quality is exceptional, with the shell increasing in thickness towards the snare side, designed to produce a 'soft sound' on the batter, while delivering maximum sound precision on the snare side. The bearing edge (which is perfectly round) is also wider on the snare side.

In test, after increasing the tuning on the batter side, we quickly achieved the high end attack we were looking for – the sensitivity and precision of the snare is very apparent. Whether this is due to the trade marked shell, or whether it is simply the natural sound of the drum, we are not sure. Either way the overall effect is very pleasing. The drum responds well at all volume levels, with our test product producing a lovely warm, dry response with plenty of attack.

With an RRP of £861, it may not be cheap, but then again, you wouldn't expect to pay much less for a high-end drum of this quality. We would encourage all drummers to put this unique drum through its paces and would wager that many will add it to their collection. Be warned however, you will need to have transport close to hand, as this is one of the heaviest drums we have ever tested!

www.activemusic.co.uk/dsdrum

Key Leaves reed guard

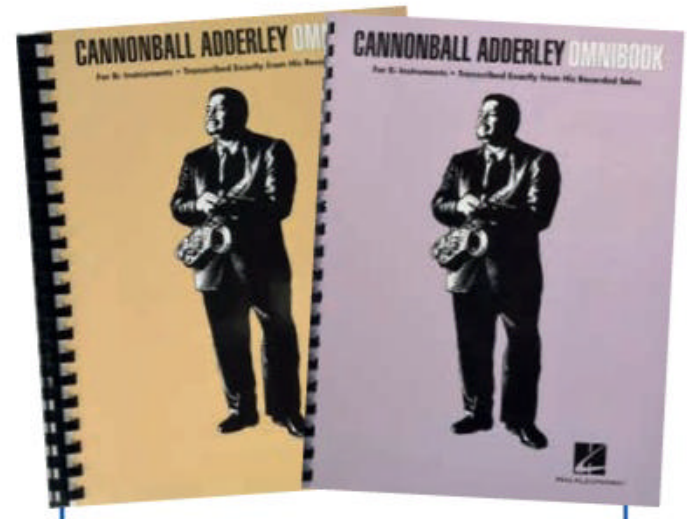
Made out of strong polymer comp, this new woodwind reed guard from Key Leaves was born out of the perceived need for a reed guard that would safely hold four reeds in a light-weight case that is ultra-flat; and perhaps most importantly, can be easily taken apart for a quick clean.

Rulon Brown, saxophonist and CEO of Key Leaves comments on the thinking behind this new product: "I was frustrated using reed cases that can't be cleaned, and I hate it when bulky reed holders clank around inside the instrument case. So I designed the Key Leaves reed case to be minimalist – thin, lightweight, super flat, easy to clean, and made from a non-marring, rugged glass alternative material and FDA grade O-rings that won't scratch up a horn if it accidentally gets loose inside the case."

He goes on to say that "new reeds often come packed in flexible paper sleeves or warped plastic cases that provide poor long-term storage. This reed guard stores your clarinet and saxophone reeds on an ultra-flat surface, so they dry flat and play better, longer."

When put to the test, to use a well worked phrase: "It does what it says on the tin!"

www.keyleaves.com



Eb and Bb Cannonball Adderley Solos *Omnibooks* by Hal Leonard

Like all recent *Omnibooks* from Hal Leonard, the printing is good and clear with all three volumes being bound with the now customary firm cover and good-sized ring binder, which allows the book to be opened flat on a stand.

The solos have been transcribed well, although the word 'exactly' on the cover is a bit misleading. Like most transcriptions they are quantised, which is just as well, as they would not be readable to play otherwise. It's important that anyone playing these solos listens to the piece and makes their own or copy the nuances of the original player.

They have added in prompts for percussion, piano and other instruments to aid with the performance. With the piano prompts they have bothered to put the full chords in, which is really helpful. Annotation for the solos is appropriate with all the typical altered chords etc to give you the true colours.

However, the Cannonball solos are transcribed for Bb, when for the most part Cannonball played an Eb alto! This makes no sense, as the fingerings and what he plays is not the same. It may sound the same, but is not the same. Surely, all transcriptions should be published in the keys that they were originally played in for the instrument that was used.

Having said all of that, the two saxophone *Omnibooks* contain a wealth of transcribed solos. The interesting part is that the Cannonball Adderley book has many solos that belonged to him, but in the *Saxophone Omnibooks* only one appears attributed to him. This can only mean there are many more solos to be transcribed and added at some later date. We look forward to seeing future editions. **www.halleonard.com**

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02 MAY	N.IRL	**Derry**, Co. Londonderry	City of Derry Jazz & Big Band Festival Bennigans
03 MAY	ENG	**Bishops Castle**	Clun Valley Jazz Festival, SpArC Theatre Part of UNESCO/CV Jazz World Jazz Celebration
17 MAY	ENG	**London**	Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club
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THE PLAYER

RILEY STONE-LONERGAN

As a member of the QOW Trio, tenorist **Riley Stone-Lonergan** has been tearing it up across the UK on tour and on their acclaimed new album *The Hold Up*. **David Gallant** discovers how he started playing jazz and the instruments he's played over the years

"When I was about 16, I heard John Coltrane for the first time," says Riley, "and it really grabbed me instantly, and I completely fell in love with the freedom of jazz and improvised music."

Riley Stone-Lonergan grew up in Galway, Ireland into a family steeped in traditional Irish music: "My sister and a lot of my Lonergan cousins are wonderful traditional Irish musicians. We get together once a year in Tipperary, and it's always a great time. My dad played guitar and wrote and sang his own songs, while my mum also sings and has recently joined a choir."

Riley remembers his early introduction to the world of music: "My first instrument was guitar. My dad used to take me to lessons when I was very young, maybe age five or something. We used to sit down together on the kerb of the street outside right after the lessons and he would get me to show him what I'd learned. I didn't like it very much at first, but when I started getting into rock and metal a bit later, I got quite serious about it."

He continues: "I was interested in quite a few instruments at first, before I eventually settled on the saxophone. So I got lessons on piano, guitar, clarinet and saxophone on and off."

Riley joined the Galway Youth Orchestra on clarinet playing, "every single Saturday all through my childhood years. And when they set up a Jazz Orchestra, I joined that as well on saxophone. This is where I met a lot of my closest friends, and it was a huge part of my social and musical development. I have great memories of those times."

He eventually left the Emerald Isle to study Jazz at Leeds College of Music.

"A couple of musicians I knew and played with in Galway had studied there and it was the only jazz course I was aware of. I had a great time in Leeds, meeting my now wife, as well as a lot of friends and musicians I still play with today."

> ***"You can't compare a new horn to a good old one, the depth of sound is just unmatched"***

So what instruments has Riley played over the years?

"The very first saxophone I ever owned was a beat-up old alto my dad got me at an auction somewhere for about £50. It was sometime in the early 2000s, maybe 2002. I've no idea what the make was, as it was scratched off and there was loads of mould in the bell. The instrument barely played. It was awful. I struggled away with that for a while until my teacher Bertrand (who I owe a lot to because of this) took my dad aside and told him I showed some potential, but if he didn't get me a better instrument I would give up.

"He also suggested that tenor would suit me better. My dad, bless his heart, was in London in 2005 and went looking for a saxophone. He found one in Macari's Music Shop on Denmark Street for £300 – he got it for £250!

"He then went up to a guy on the tube with a saxophone case and asked him to try the horn out that he'd just bought. They got off together at the next station and this guy played it right there on the platform and told dad it was a decent horn; it's a Conn Director 16m from 1966 I think. I loved it and immediately took to it. It was my main horn for years, and I still have it in Ireland. It's what I practise on when I'm home."

In 2008 Riley went with his mother to Woodwind Exchange in Bradford, "because I wanted to get a really good vintage horn and there was an absolute tonne of them in that shop. I'd saved up a bit of money, but completely fell in love with a 1956 Selmer Mark VI that was £4,000. My mum lent me the rest of the money, and I gradually paid her back by doing function gigs."

Riley still plays that same Mark VI today. "It's an absolute beauty. You can't compare a new horn to a good old one, the depth of sound is just unmatched. The reason I like the Mark VI so much is because of the keywork action – you can really fly around it, but also the consistency of range and ease of producing a sound." But is this, I wondered, Riley's ultimate horn? "One of my favourite saxophones I've ever played was a Conn 10m I tried in Woodwind Exchange once. It was £1,500 and I was a poor student at the time. I dearly wish that I'd bought it now."

I'm keen to know what mouthpieces and ligatures Riley uses. "I use an old Selmer Soloist and the original Selmer ligature that comes with it. It's all I've ever played on really, I have looked for other stuff in the past, but never found anything I liked. I feel like I'm the only saxophone player on earth who isn't obsessed with mouthpieces!" And reeds? "Rico Jazz Select 3 hard unfiled (I guess it's D'Addario Jazz Select now). They're just my favourite reed that I've ever tried. But even so, they're so incredibly inconsistent. I think if someone brought out a really great synthetic reed one day, we would all switch." He pauses for a moment. "But it just isn't quite the same."

Photo: Lisa Wormsley

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Live Reviews

Kokoroko (main photo) and YolanDa Brown (left)

Riyadh International Jazz Festival

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

When it comes to the arts, at least, things are changing rapidly in Saudi Arabia. Only six years ago concerts with mixed-sex audiences were banned, but since then there have been pop events like Soundstorm, featuring the likes of Metallica. And now comes the first Riyadh International Jazz Festival, produced by the Ministry of Culture's Music Commission.

"Jazz is a broad genre", as the Commission's CEO Paul Pacifico (formerly with the UK Association of Independent Music) stressed at the start. He had an 1,800-seat hall to fill, so it was perhaps to be expected that the headliners included Chaka Khan and Australia's glorious global fusion band The Cat Empire. But there was still an emphasis on jazz, with the vast stage decked out like some 1930s art deco jazz club, and video screens showing old black and white footage of jazz dancers before the music began. Outside, in the VIP area among the palm trees, there was a little stage where Saudi singer Loulwa Al-Sharif perched on a stool to sing 'Fever' and 'Fly Me To The Moon', as waiters served tea and cakes – but no alcohol.

This was a new experience both for the audience and most of the artists, and it was encouraging to see that British jazz – and female jazz artists – were well-received. Saxophonist YolanDa Brown was in exuberant form in a glittery trouser suit, treating the hall as if it were some intimate club as she switched from jazz-funk to an impressive solo on 'ConFusion', then reggae with 'Is This Love?' ("which King Charles had requested") and the new, cheerfully upbeat 'Kicking The Door Down'. By the time she reached 'Summertime', she was walking out among the crowd, still playing.

There was more of a cheerful late night-night feel to the set from Kokoroko, fronted by Sheila Maurice-Grey on trumpet and Richie Seivwright on trombone, both of whom switched between brass and vocals as they mixed Afrobeat influences and slower, emotional songs like 'Home' or their thoughtful answer to Marvin Gaye's 'Something's Going On'.

There was also Saudi jazz-rock from local band Garwasha, and Bahraini jazz-rock from Majaz, in an easy-going festival at which the audience only once got up from their seats and rushed to the stage, at the invitation of Chaka Khan. **Robin Denselow**

Brussels Jazz Festival

Flagey, Ixelles, Belgium

Brussels Jazz Festival has now returned to its full pre-2021, 10-day spread, a fortuitous decision as pretty much every gig hit audience capacity. A supreme highlight was Kahil El'Zabar's Ethnic Heritage Ensemble, celebrating their 50th anniversary. The singer-percussionist leader's core combo toured enthusiastically last year, but this set included the special bonus of tenor saxophonist David Murray and trombonist Joe Bowie, founder of the boiling Defunkt in 1978, and an EHE member from 1986.

El'Zabar is an amazing character, a shining-charisma leader whose powerful and versatile vocals are steeped in deep old gospel and soul traditions. He's also an extremely resourceful percussionist, moving from drum-set to *cajon*, or simply thumbing mbira, and tying on an ankle-shaker, according to the needs of each song.

An extended chant introduction had various elements receding and coming forth again, Bowie on congas, Murray taking the first solo, stirring up from the beginning. Then, unexpectedly, came a cajon solo. Equally strong spotlights emerged from Alex Harding's baritone, as El'Zabar's vocals revealed their controlled stentorian projection qualities. He has an old school theatrical, declamatory style, very rousing. The horns share another sort of power, when uniting in a thematic repetition, as 'Compared To What?' kicked in, prompting some exciting 'bone, trumpet and saxophone interplay. Murray and Harding faced each other to trade electrified phrases.

Much less volatile was Marquis Hill, the night before. In 2018, the Chicagoan trumpeter's set with his Blacktet was complicatedly scorching, a festival highlight, for sure, but recent gigs have revealed Hill in a softer, more introverted state. Here he led a piano trio, seemingly more interested in his laptop and table of small percussion instruments. The sampling was feeble and dated, the percussion was weak when so recently compared to that wielded by Isaiah Collier. An impressionistic miasma was cultivated, with Hill flicking out some crispy phrases, and Corey Fonville's light-touch drumming making a perpetual tumble. Hill paid homage to Roy Hargrove, and then the best tune was old chestnut 'To Be Free', with its harmonised fx opening, splitting softness with a Mexican-style lament, eternally rising, from one step to the next. **Martin Longley**

Bukky Leo & Black Egypt

Ronnie Scott's, London

Growing up in Lagos, and falling under the wing of Afrobeat legend, drummer Tony Allen, it was perhaps inevitable that

Photo: Courtesy Riyadh International Jazz Festival

saxophonist Bukky Leo would spend much of his time since paying tribute to the giants of African music – Allen, Hugh Maskela, William Onyeabor and, of course, Fela Kuti. There are plenty of outfiits paying 'tribute to the funk of Nigeria', as Bukky and his super-tight 11-piece Black Egypt group do tonight, but none are as authentic, or as locked into that relentless, open-ended Kuti groove; close your eyes, and you could have been in the old Kalakuta Shrine and not Soho's most venerable jazz joint.

They're not just another Fela tribute act either: enigmatic synth master Onyeabor's two biggest hits, 'Good Name' and 'Atomic Bomb' are transformed into furious, relentless workouts – both of which one wishes could go on forever; the Allen tribute 'Jealousy' is insistent in its lolloping forward motion; 'Obedun', the title track of Bukky's new album, wows with its choppy guitars, squeezy synth and bass-percussion groove; 'Activate Your Life' is a marvellous mashup of US soul and Afrobeat; and the female backing singers' voices working in unison with the horns on the thunderously funky 'We Don't Wanna Fight Your Wars No More' was truly inspired. The final number, Fela's 'Water Get No Enemy', got everyone – pensioners included – at Ronnie's up and dancing. Black Egypt are one of the very best live acts you can see right now, so make sure you catch 'em. **Kevin Whitlock**

Angrusori

St Mary Magdalene's Church, Paddington

Before the audience filed in, the nave of the Grade I listed, neo-Gothic church felt cold and intimidating. Bang on time, the 10 members of the mixed Slovak-Norwegian orchestra Angrusori, under Nils Henrik Asheim, took the stage with the Moravian virtuosa of simultaneous violin-vocal extemporisation and dynamics, Iva Bittová. Like their *Live at Tou*, the concert's backbone was a garland of Romani songs which the Slovak ethnomusicologist and film-maker Jana Belišová collected from her country's marginalised Roma minority.

They cast off with the slow-fuse, Johnnie Walker-sodden tale, 'Sar me kere džava' ('When I was going home'). Petter Frost Fadnes's baritone sax grumble (masterful circular breathing) led into dissonant splashes resolving into a lament. The first *off-piste* departures came with the boisterous 'Paprika melali' ('Dirty paprika') and, with Bittová as solo vocalist, 'Loli Ruža' ('Red Rose'). Norwegian vocalist Signe Irene Time's solo vehicle, 'O Verden, hav da gode Nat' ('Oh World, have a good night') added a religious note to the proceedings.

Andy Bell's instrument separation and sound were a masterclass in acoustics. The auditorium's dimensions and a band of this size presented real challenges. When rhythmist Ståle Birkeland slipped in musical saw, you heard it before you saw it. Bittová's jazz vocalese, bird calls, sounds of nature and vocal improvisations coloured the air. They danced the evening to a close with the celebratory 'O poštaris avel' ('The postman is coming') from Dušan Hanák's communist-era film *Ružové sny* ('Rosy dreams'). A milestone in Czechoslovak cinema, it portrayed a love story between a Roma woman – an early film role for Bittová – and the *Gojo* (non-Rom) postman of the song title. That film was political in 1977. Like Civil Rights-era jazz in the States, the very existence of this music is as political in 2024. An evening of utter intensity. **Ken Hunt**

(With thanks to Iva Bittová for additional translations)

Photo: Ken Hunt

Gig Guide APRIL 24

Rosie Hanley previews the must-see gigs and concerts. Send future listings to **roseanne.hanley@gmail.com**

All listings are run free but due to space restrictions cannot be guaranteed to appear – expanded gig listings can be found at **www.jazzwise.com/gig-guide**

MONDAY

1-3 Scott Hamilton Quartet
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
1-4 The Necks
Cafe OTO, 18-22 Ashwin Street, London E8
1 Adrian Cox
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
1 Sophie Alloway
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

TUESDAY

2 James Taylor Quartet with Orchestra
Barbican, Silk Street, London EC2
2 Leon Greening Trio
Watermill Jazz, Betchworth Park Golf Club, Dorking
2 Big Band Metheny
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
2 Ray Butcher
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
2 Calum Gourlay Quintet
East Side Jazz Club, 2 Harvey Road, Leytonstone, London E11

WEDNESDAY

3 Liam Noble and Geoff Simkins
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
3 Elijah Fox
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
3 Natalie Williams and Strings
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
3 Dudley Nesbitt
Seven Arts, 31 Harrogate Road, Leeds
3 Emily Francis Trio
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

THURSDAY

4 Paul Dunmall Invites Nikki Yeoh, Ollie Brice and Mark Sanders
Eastside Jazz Club, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, 200 Jennens Road, Birmingham
4 Basil Hodge Quintet
Bonington Theatre, High Street, Nottingham
4 Drift-Lab
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, Soho, London W1
4 Iain Ballamy
The Marrs Bar, 12 Pierpoint Street, Worcestershire
4 David Preston
Rose Hill, Rose Hill Terrace, Brighton
4 Robert Mitchell's Epiphany Trio
Elgar Room, Royal Albert Hall, London SW7
4 Tomorrow's New Quartet
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

FRIDAY

5 Electric Swing Circus
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
5 Tony Kofi and the Organisation
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
5 Black Voices with Mica Paris
Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1
5 Moyses Dos Santos
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
5 Dennis Rollins
Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham
5 Five Way Split
Ladbroke Hall, 79 Barlby Road, London W10
5 Bridget Metcalfe Quartet
Saltburn Community Hall, Albion Terrace, Saltburn-by-sea
5 Dave Lewis 1 Up
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
5 Iain Ballamy
Birmingham Jazz, 1000 Trades, Frederick Street, Birmingham

SATURDAY

6 Dennis Rollins
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
6 David Preston
Stamford Arts Centre, 27 St Mary's St, Stamford
6 Joe Chambers Quintet
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
6 Ray Gelato Swing Quartet
Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham
6 Chris Bowden Quartet
Derby Jazz, The Hound Dog, 6 Friar Gate, Derby
6 Tristan Banks Quartet
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
6 Ineza, plus Hannah Horton
The Swinging Cat Jazz Club, Haverhill Arts Centre, High Street, Haverhill
6 Jake Leg Jug Band
St Augustine's Parish Centre, Larchfield Centre, Darlington
6 Mark Lockheart
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
6 Dave O'Higgins
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

SUNDAY

7 Ian Shaw with Tony Kofi
The Guildhall, High Street, Henley in Arden

Joel Ross, The Vortex, London, 11 April

7 Carol Grimes (lunchtime)
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
7 Ruth Lambert
Central Bar, Half Moon Lane, Gateshead
7 Mary May Band and Manray
The Blue Lamp, 121 Gallowgate, Aberdeen
7 Lewis Watson Quartet
Globe, Railway Street, Newcastle upon Tyne
7 Pete Allen Jazz Band
The Donnington Valley Hotel and Spa, Old Oxford Road, Donnington
7 Lulu Pierre with Alex Webb Trio
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

MONDAY

8-9 Lynne Arriale Trio
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
8 Ronnie Scott's Jazz Orchestra
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1

8 John Edwards, Mark Sanders, Trevor Watts and Veryan Weston
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
8 Pete Allen Jazz Band
The Conservative Club, Radway Place, Sidmouth
8 Dino Baptiste
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

TUESDAY

9 Julian Marc Stringle Quartet
Watermill Jazz, Betchworth Park Golf Club, Dorking
9 Idris Ackamoor and The Pyramids
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
9 Espen Berg Trio
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
9 Dan Reinstein
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
9 Grifton Forbes-Amos Quintet
East Side Jazz Club, 2 Harvey Road, Leytonstone, London E11

WEDNESDAY

10-13 Ahmed
Cafe OTO, 18-22 Ashwin Street, London E8
10 Basil Hodge Quintet
Fleece Jazz, Stoke-by-Nayland Hotel, Colchester

6-7 Evan Parker at 80

Cafe OTO, 18-22 Ashwin Street, London E8

A special two-day 80th birthday residency with Brit jazz saxophone colossus **Evan Parker**, whose debut album, *The Topography of the Lungs* (Incus) with Derek Bailey and Han Bennink, was released in 1970 and he's barely slowed down since with an astonishing and huge discography across a vast number of collaborations with everyone from Barry Guy and Dave Holland to Roscoe Michell, Michael Nyman and Squarepusher. He's well-known for his group work as well as his solo performances with his inquisitive attitude toward techniques such as multiphonics, overblowing and circular breathing continuing to push the technical boundaries of the saxophone – rightly earning him critical acclaim and much respect from his peers. Across the weekend, Parker is joined by the likes of **Barry Guy**, **John Edwards, Mark Sanders** and more to celebrate this milestone birthday.

8 The Necks

Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham

Australian cult heroes **The Necks** are comprised of pianist **Chris Abrahams,** drummer **Tony Buck** and bassist **Lloyd Swanton**. Together they have released 18 albums over 36 years. Here they play this intimate Nottingham venue for the first time across two completely improvised sets. Expect ambient jazz and hypnotic minimalism from this jazz trio – which is unlike any other you may have heard. They improvise and respond to the audience and environment they play in – making it a truly unique gig experience. This long-form improv group come highly recommended: they'll be at Cafe OTO for a four-day residency this month too (1-4 April).

12 La Linea: Lila Downs

Barbican, Silk Street, London EC2

La Linea – the London Latin music festival – returns to the capital this month, across various venues in central London. The festivities get underway with a performance from Grammy Award-winning Mexican-American vocalist **Lila Downs** (pictured above) at the Barbican. Other highlights include a performance from two of Rio de Janeiro's most exciting musicians, **Domenico Lancellotti** and **Ricardo Dias Gomes**, who bring a new Rio samba sound with elements of funk and psychedelia to Cafe OTO (21 Apr), while fellow Brazilians, **Nacao Zumbi** play Jazz Cafe (22 Apr) and Colombian salsa legend **Fruko** performs with **The Bonita House Band**, also at Jazz Cafe (19 Apr).

10 Soft Machine, plus Anika Nilles-Nevell
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
10 Capital City Jazz Orchestra
Swansea Jazz Club, Cu Mumbles, 7 Castleton Walk Arcade, Newton Road, Swansea
10 Francesca Confortini
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

THURSDAY

11-13 David Benoit
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
11 Orlando Le Fleming and Romantic Funk, plus Richie Goods and Chien Chien – Connected
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
11 Joel Ross
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
11 Karen Sharp
Eastside Jazz Club, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, 200 Jennens Road, Birmingham
11 Kieron Garrett Quartet
Fougou Jazz, Livermead Cliff Hotel, Seafront, Torbay Road, Torquay
11 John East
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

FRIDAY

12 Beverley Skeete
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
12 Clark Tracey Quintet
Sheffield Jazz, Crookes Social Club, Mulehouse Road, Sheffield
12 Alina Bzhezhinska and Tony Kofi
Turner Sims, University of Southampton, Southampton
12 Helen Gayle
Derby Jazz, The Hound Dog, 6 Friar Gate, Derby
12 Omar Puente Charanga Sextet
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
12 Gareth Lockrane Quintet
Ladbroke Hall, 79 Barlby Road, London W10
12 Liane Carroll Trio
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
12 Kindred re:union
Purcell Room, Southbank Centre, London SE1
12 Pete Tanto's Chet Set
Old Library, Auckland Castle, Market Place, Bishop Auckland
12 Alan Barnes and Trio
Wakefield Jazz, Sports Club, 8 Eastmoor Road, Wakefield
12 Mark Lockheart and Chris Batchelor Quintet
Chichester Jazz Club, Pallant Suite, Freemason's Hall, 7 South Pallant, Chichester
12 James Allsopp Quartet
Birmingham Jazz, 1000 Trades, Frederick Street, Birmingham

SATURDAY

13 Brice, Dunmall, Sanders and Yeoh
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
13 Rob Luft
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
13 La Linea: Ana Tijoux
Village Underground, 54 Holywell Lane, London EC2
13 Down for the Count Orchestra
Turner Sims, University of Southampton, Southampton
13 Rachel Z feat Omar Hakim
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
13 The Jazz Defenders
Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham
13 Eric Mingus
West Hampstead Arts Club, 32 Mill Lane, London NW6
13 Giles Strong Quartet
Claypath Delicatessen, Claypath,
13 Madeline Bell
Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, London SW1
13 Rob Barron Trio
The Pheasantry, 152/154 King's Road, London SW3

SUNDAY

14 NYJO play Mingus (lunchtime)
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
14 QOW Trio
Five Lamps Festival, Dublin
14 La Linea: Los Tigres del Norte
Eventim Apollo, 45 Queen Caroline Street, Hammersmith London W6
14 Shayna Steele (evening) That's Life with Gary Williams (lunchtime)
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
14 Samba Roda Viva
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
14 The Jazz Defenders
Seven Arts, 31 Harrogate Road, Leeds
14 Hamish Stuart
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

MONDAY

15 Michael Feinberg Trio with Aaron Goldberg
The Pheasantry, 152/154 King's Road, London SW3
15 Mark Turner Quartet
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
15 Russ Morgan Quartet
Black Bull, Bridge Street, Blaydon
15-16 Jon Cleary
PizzaExpress Live Holborn, 99 High Holborn, London WC1
15 Rotem Sivan
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1

TUESDAY

16 Ben, Bean, Bird and Alan Barnes
East Side Jazz Club, 2 Harvey Road, Leytonstone, London E11
16 Yakul
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
16 La Linea: La Yegros
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
16 Goldings, Bernstein and Stewart
Watermill Jazz, Betchworth Park Golf Club, Dorking
16 James Brandon Lewis Quartet
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
16 Clark Tracey Quintet
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1

WEDNESDAY

17 John Settle
Seven Arts, 31 Harrogate Road, Leeds
17-20 Hammond Fest with Rhoda Scott, Goldings-Bernstein-Stewart and Ross Stanley
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
17-18 Mica Paris
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
17 Hot Club Gallois
Swansea Jazz Club, Cu Mumbles, 7 Castleton Walk Arcade, Newton Road, Swansea
17 Down for the Count Orchestra
St George's Bristol, Great George Street, Bristol
17 Shirley Smart Sextet
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
17 Kate Williams with Mike Outram
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

THURSDAY

18 Di-Cysgodion
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16
18 RTE Orchestra with Guy Barker
The National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin
18 Ben Crosland
Cambridge Modern Jazz, 7B Jesus Lane, Cambridge
18 Hejira
The Y Theatre, 7 East Street, Leicester
18 The Remi Harris Hot Club Trio
Crazy Coqs, Brasserie Zedel, 20 Sherwood Street, London W1
18 Sam Leak
The Marrs Bar, 12 Pierpoint Street, Worcestershire
18 Tony Levin Drum Prize
Eastside Jazz Club, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, 200 Jennens Road, Birmingham
18 Sloth Racket, plus Anthropods
Free Range, Fruitworks Co-working, 1-2 Jewry Lane, Canterbury
18 Matt Carmichael Quintet
Seven Arts, 31 Harrogate Road, Leeds

FRIDAY

19 John Burgess and Campbell Normand
St Peter's Church, High Street, Linlithgow
19 Moscow Drug Club
Wakefield Jazz, Sports Club, 8 Eastmoor Road, Wakefield
19 Godwin Louis Quintet
Ladbroke Hall, 79 Barlby Road, London W10
19 Trish Clowes and Ross Stanley
St George's Bristol, Great George Street, Bristol
19 Binker Golding
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
19 Alina Bzhezhinska and Tony Kofi
Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1
19 Deschanel Gordon
Crazy Coqs, Brasserie Zedel, 20 Sherwood Street, London W1
19 La Linea: Fruko and The Bonita House Band
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
19 Hejira
Derby Jazz, The Hound Dog, 6 Friar Gate, Derby
19 Matt Carmichael Quintet
Sheffield Jazz, Crookes Social Club, Mulehouse Road, Sheffield
19 Antonio Forcione and Giorgio Serci Guitar Duo
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
19 Lindsay Hannon
Seventeen Nineteen, Church Street East, Sunderland
19 Cia Tomasso
Lit & Phil, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne
19 Joe Webb
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
19 Sloth Racket, plus Anthropods
Hundred Years Gallery, 13 Pearson Street, London E2
19 Örjan Hultén Orion
Birmingham Jazz, 1000 Trades, Frederick Street, Birmingham

SATURDAY

20 Sloth Racket, plus Anthropods
Ambition's Graveyard, Unit 6c, ABC Wharf, Norwich
20 Omar Puente and Ilario Ferrari
Crazy Coqs, Brasserie Zedel, 20 Sherwood Street, London W1
20 La Linea: Desta French and friends
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
20 Hejira
Croft Hall, Hungerford
20 Moscow Drug Club
Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham
20 Nat Steele Quartet
Stapleford Granary, Bury Road, Stapleford, Cambridge

17 Sloth Racket, plus Anthropods

Jazz at the Lescar, Sharrowvale Road, Sheffield

Drummer **Mark Holub**, best know for his band Led Bib, brings his burgeoning Austrian quintet, **Anthropods**, to the UK this month alongside some of the best players of the Viennese improvised music scene (cellist **Clemens Sainitzer**, violinist **Irene Kepl,** bass clarinettist **Susanna Gartmayer**, and tenor saxophonist **Jakob Gnigler**). They celebrate the launch of a new album via a double bill tour with saxophonist **Cath Robert's Sloth Racket** (also featuring alto saxophonist **Sam Andreae**, **Anton Hunter**, bassist **Seth Bennett** and drummer **Johnny Hunter**). For this tour Anthropods will play the 'Abundant Shores Suite' from their new record, as well as some selected tracks from their first album. Sloth Racket will perform new material, demonstrating their distinctive blend of composition and improv.

Airshots
April 24 Radio

BBC RADIO 2 88-91 FM and DAB
Jamie Cullum show (Tues, 9pm)

BBC RADIO 3 90-93 FM and DAB

'Round Midnight (Mon-Fri 11.30pm)

Jazz Record Requests (Sun, 4pm)

BBC RADIO 6 MUSIC DAB
Gilles Peterson, Sat 3pm

JAZZ FM DAB, Sky, Alexa, smartphone, tablet and online at jazzfm.com
(Mon – Fri) 6am-6.30am Business Breakfast, 6.30am-10am Jazz FM Breakfast with Nigel Williams, 10am-2pm Midmornings with Danielle Perry, 2pm-6pm Afternoon drive with Simon Philips, 6pm-7pm Jazz FM's Greatest with Mark Walker, 7pm-9pm Dinner Jazz with Mark Walker. (Mon) 9pm-10pm The Performance Series with Ruth Fisher, 10pm-Midnight Late Night China Moses. (Tues) 9pm-10pm Jazz Travels with Sarah Ward, 10pm-Midnight Late Night China Moses. (Weds) . 9pm-10pm The Big Easy with Lil' Koko. 10pm-Midnight Late Night China Moses. (Thurs) 9pm-10pm True Brit with Helen Mayhew. 10pm-Midnight Late Night China Moses. (Fri) 9pm-10pm The Ronnie Scott's Radio Show with Ian Shaw. 10pm-1am Late Night Jazz with Helen Mayhew. (Sat) 6am-9am The Weekend Breakfast with Nia Visser, 9am-10am Jazz Shapers with Elliot Moss, 10am-2pm Nigel Williams Saturday Show, 2pm-6pm YolanDa Brown on Saturday, 6pm-9pm The Sarah Ward Collection, 9pm-10pm Jazz FM Voices, 10pm-1am The Blueprint with Chris Philips. (Sun) 6am-10am The Weekend Breakfast with Simon Phillips, 10am-1pm Tony Minvielle, 1-3pm Robbie Vincent, 3pm-5pm Sunday Afternoons with John Osborne, 5-7pm Blues and Boogie with David Freeman, 7pm-9pm Clare Teal Big Band Jazz; 9pm Sunday Discovery and 10pm-1am Somethin' Else with Jez Nelson, Ruth Fisher's Full Circle 1-3am.

ONLINE AND PODCASTS
Courtney Pine's Global Podcast at www.jazz-pod.com
www.soulandjazz.com – Mike Chadwick bi-weekly show; Tony Minvielle, first and third Wednesdays each month;
Jazz Haven with Robert Howe (8-10pm Mondays) www.avondaleradio.com/schedule/#monday
Jazz On The Beach with Adam Sieff, every Wednesday from 10.00pm - 12.00 midnight on DealRadio.co.uk; the 606 Club Straight Ahead Show with Dave Lewis, every Wednesday at 10pm.
Richard Heath's Alt 2 Show www.radio.lsu.co.uk (9-11pm Thurs);
www.mykindamusic24.com – the Jazz Cavern, Thur 9pm
Dave Self's Sounds of Jazz (4-5pm Tues) www.tunein.com/radio/Blast-1386-s6837/
www.jazzlondonradio.com
www.cosmicjazz.co.uk with Derek Merrill
www.careradio.org - Alan Steadman's Jazz Waves Sun 11pm and repeated.

REGIONAL RADIO ENGLAND
World Beats, Kane 103.7 FM www.kanefm.com (Thurs, 11am); The Jazz Show, 99.2 Hermitage FM with Peter Varden (Weds, 6pm) on 99.2 FM in north west Leicestershire area and online at www.hermitagefm.com; Jazz Kaleidoscope with Alan Musson on 102.5FM in the Southern Black Country and online at www.thebridgeradio.net (Mon, 9pm); Slipstreem Worldwide Beats, RadioReverb 97.2 FM in Brighton and radioreverb.com (11am Sunday); Late Night Jazz with Colin Dickenson, Witney Radio 99.9-107.9 FM (Thurs, 10pm)

WALES Radio Cardiff 98.7 FM, Humie Webbe's Jazz Train (Sun, 10am) and Late Night Jazz (Thurs 10-11pm) on www.witney.radio.

SCOTLAND BBC Radio Scotland 92.4-94.7 FM The Jazz Nights with Seonaid Aitken (Sun, 7pm)

NORTHERN IRELAND BBC Radio Ulster 92-95 FM Walter Love (Sun, 7pm)

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND RTÉ John Kelly's Mystery Train, RTE Lyric FM (Sun-Thurs, 7-9pm); Brian Priestley's That's Jazz, Radio Kerry (Weds, 9-10pm and podcast).

20 Mica Miller
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
20 Maiuko Quintet
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
20 Brian Molley Quartet
Jazz at the Rock, Baron's Craig, Rockcliffe, Dalbeattie, Dumfries & Galloway

SUNDAY
21 Derek Nash and Noel McCalla
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
21 Doncaster Jazz Alumni
Earl of Doncaster Hotel, Doncaster
21 Art Themen with Dean Stockdale Trio
Globe, Railway Street, Newcastle upon Tyne
21 La Linea: Domenico Lancellotti and Ricardo Dias Gomes
Cafe OTO, 18-22 Ashwin Street, London E8
21 Natalie Williams Soul Family
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
21 Jazz Defenders
Cluny, Lime Street, Newcastle upon Tyne
21 Jamie Toms Quartet
Queen's Hall Arts Centre, Beaumont Street, Hexham
21 John Altman Big Band
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
21 Rod Mason Quartet
Huddersfield Jazz, Irish Centre, Huddersfield

MONDAY
22 Samara Joy
Band on the Wall, 25 Swan Street, Manchester
22 La Linea: Nacao Zumbi
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
22 Tom Smith Big Band
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
22 Elchin Shirinov Trio
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1

TUESDAY
23 Jalen Ngonda
Newcastle Student's Union, King's Road, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne
23 Tomasz Bura Group
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
23 Samara Joy
Usher Hall, Lothian Road, Edinburgh
23 Sean Gibbs Quintet
East Side Jazz Club, 2 Harvey Road, Leytonstone, London E11
23 Phil Mulford's Thunderthumbs
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

WEDNESDAY
24 Richard Shelton
Darlington Hippodrome, Parkgate, Darlington
24 Chris Ingham Quartet
Fleece Jazz, Stoke-by-Nayland Hotel, Colchester
24 Black Top
Cafe OTO, 18-22 Ashwin Street, London E8
24 Chip Wickham
Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham
24 Ute Lemper
St George's Bristol, Great George Street, Bristol
24 Alan Barnes with Dave Cottle Trio
Swansea Jazz Club, Cu Mumbles, 7 Castleton Walk Arcade, Newton Road, Swansea
24-27 Eastwood by Eastwood
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
24 Ian Shaw with Tony Kofi
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
24 Swing You Sinners
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16

THURSDAY
25 Jeremy McMurray and the Pocket Jazz Orchestra
Arc, Dovecot Street, Stockton on Tees
25 Trish Clowes and Ross Stanley
Sheffield Jazz, Crookes Social Club, Mulehouse Road, Sheffield
25 Samara Joy
B:Music, Town Hall, Birmingham
25 Awen Ensemble
Peggy's Skylight, 3 George Street, Nottingham
25 Ute Lemper
Turner Sims, University of Southampton, Southampton
25 Jo Harrop
Seven Arts, 31 Harrogate Road, Leeds
25 Hungarian Jazz Night
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

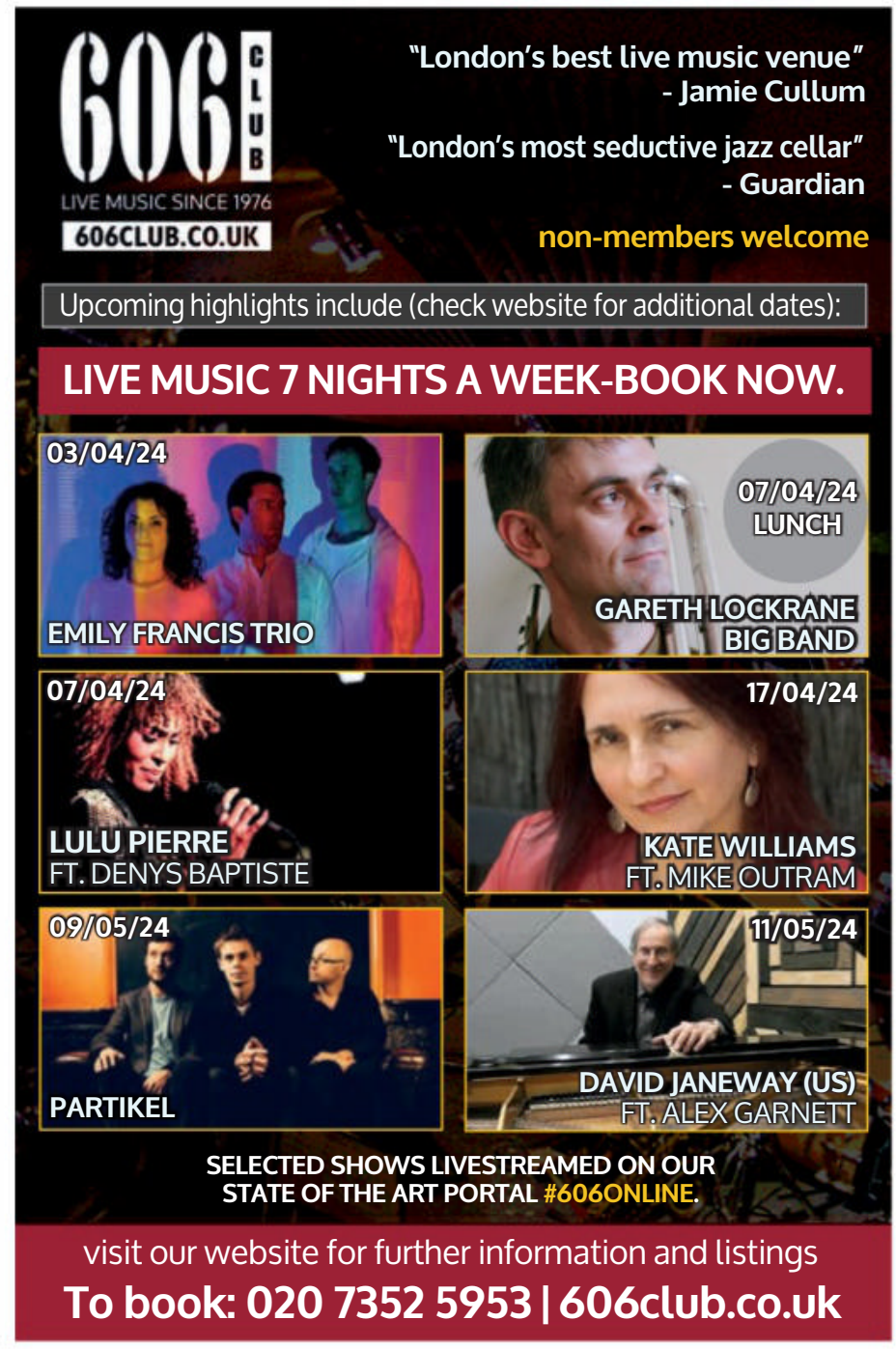
FRIDAY
26 Samara
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
26 Abbie Finn Trio
Traveller's Rest, West Auckland Road, Cockerton, Darlington
26 Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio
Ladbroke Hall, 79 Barlby Road, London W10
26 Clark Tracey Quintet
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
26-28 Brick Lane Jazz Festival: Theo Croker, Byron Waller, Sultan Stevenson and more
Various venues, London
26 Paul Skerritt with Danny Miller Big Band
Glasshouse, St Mary's Square, Gateshead Quays, Gateshead
26 Ni Maxine sings Billie Holiday
PizzaExpress Live Holborn, 99 High Holborn, London WC1
26 Graham Hardy Quartet
Gala Theatre & Cinema, Millennium Place, Durham
26 Karen Sharp Quartet
Birmingham Jazz, 1000 Trades, Frederick Street, Birmingham

SATURDAY
27 Ese & The Vooduu People
The Troubadour, 265-267 Old Brompton Road, London SW5
27 Hannah Horton Quartet
Upstairs at The Gather, Ennerdale Bridge, Cumbria
27 Hypnotic Brass Ensemble
Jazz Cafe, 5 Parkway, Camden, London NW1
27 Omar
The Forge, Delaney Street, Camden, London NW1
27 Aleh Ferreira
Verdict Jazz Club, 159 Edward Street, Kemptown, Brighton
27 Abbie Finn Trio
Vault, East Row, Darlington

SUNDAY
28 Andrew McCormack Trio
Glasshouse, St Mary's Square, Gateshead Quays, Gateshead
28 Ahmed, Josephine Foster and Ruth Goller's Skylla
Bristol New Music, Strange Brew, 10-12 Fairfax Street, Bristol
28 W3 Funk Sessions (evening) Pete Long and Ryan Quigley Quintet (lunchtime)
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
28 GSL Big Band
Seven Arts, 31 Harrogate Road, Leeds
28 Wayne Hernandez
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

MONDAY
29 David Preston
Jazz at The Parakeet, 256 Kentish Town Road, London NW5
29-30 Antonio Forcione Quartet
Ronnie Scott's, 47 Frith Street, London W1
29 Jazz in the Round
The Cockpit, Gateforth Street, London NW8
29 Vasilis Xenopoulos and Paul Edis Quartet
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
29 Tobago and d'Lime
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10

TUESDAY
30 Stacey Brothers
606 Club, 90 Lots Road, London SW10
30 The Jazz Defenders
Pizza Express Jazz Club, 10 Dean Street, London W1
30 Thanes and Villeins/Art Themen Trio
East Side Jazz Club, 2 Harvey Road, Leytonstone, London E11
30 Clark Tracey Quintet
Globe, Railway Street, Newcastle upon Tyne
30 Shirley Smart Trio
Watermill Jazz, Betchworth Park Golf Club, Dorking



JAZZ NOW

JAZZ NOW is the new label imprint from Jazz In Britain, the UK's leading producer of archive recordings of British modern jazz.
But JAZZ NOW is all about new music!

In April we will be releasing the first two recordings on the new label, which will feature ETERNAL TRIANGLE, a trio featuring Trevor Watts, Jamie Harris and Veryan Weston which has built a large following across Europe in the last few years.

Trevor Watts - Alto and soprano saxophones
Veryan Weston - Nord keyboard
Jamie Harris - Percussion

ETERNAL TRIANGLE's debut CD features ten brand new compositions by Trevor Watts. The Trio's arrangements have been honed during a busy touring schedule over the last couple of years and the result is a complex yet immensely listenable album which is a worthy addition to the artists' repertoire.

Secondly, KEVIN FIGES' new sextet YOU ARE HERE release their debut CD which features Kevin's new arrangements of five pieces by Keith Tippett, plus compositions by Elton Dean, Harry Miller, Dudu Pukwana and others.

Kevin Figes - Alto and soprano saxophones
Pete Judge - Trumpet
Raphael Clarkson - Trombone
Jim Blomfield - Piano and keyboards
Riaan Vosloo - Double bass
Tony Orrell - Drums and percussion

YOU ARE HERE is a loving tribute to friends, mentors and collaborators no longer with us. Featuring new arrangements of compositions by Keith Tippett, Elton Dean, Harry Miller and others, the album's 14 tracks are a worthy monument to some of the greatest composers in British modern jazz.

Available from www.jazznow.bandcamp.com

PETERSFIELD JAZZ FESTIVAL

Eight top bands
Food and drink stalls
Under a large marquee
Proud to support
Music for Dementia
Saturday 1st June
Petersfield, Hampshire

FUNKESTRA * FULL CIRCLE QUARTET

EMILY WINDHAM TRIO * PETE ROTH TRIO * FREDDIE SAXO WALKER, BROWNE & PACK * SARAH JANE EVELEIGH THE REMEDY

Get ready to groove at the debut Petersfield Jazz Festival! World-renowned musicians will jam out Blues, Jazz, Funk, Soul & Ballads in the beautiful Churcher's College grounds, under a massive marquee from 12:30pm to 10:00pm. Let the music magic begin!

Saturday 1st June

www.petersfieldjazzfest.com

ronnie scott's JAZZ CLUB

INTERNATIONAL SPRING SPECIALS

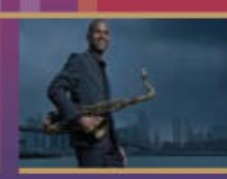
Thurs 14th & Fri 15th March:
Terence Blanchard 'Absence'
feat. The E-Collective
& Turtle Island Quartet

Tues 19th March:
Danilo Pérez, John Patitucci & Adam Cruz Trio

Thurs 21st March:
Trio Grande
- Gilad Hekselman, Will Vinson, Nate Wood

Mon 25th & Tues 26th March:
John Scofield's 'Yankee Go Home'
with Vicente Archer, Jon Cowherd, Josh Dion

Thurs 4th April:
Drift Lab



Mon 15th April:
Mark Turner Quartet

For more information call
020 7439 0747

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The 33rd 2024

SWANAGE JAZZ FESTIVAL

SWANAGE JAZZ FESTIVAL
JAZZ BY THE SEA

FRI 12TH ★ SAT 13TH ★ SUN 14TH ★ JULY

HEADLINE ACTS

★ Liane Carroll Trio ★ The Emma Rawicz Jazz Orchestra ★
★ The Wonder of Stevie with Derek Nash and Noel McCalla ★
★ Gary Crosby Sextet 'Mingus Moves' ★
★ Ian Shaw & Tony Kofi: 'An Adventurous Dream: The Music of Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington' ★
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Letters

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Westbrook, Jazz's Renaissance Man

Just a quick letter to let you know how much I enjoyed Mike Westbrook's beautiful tribute to Duke Ellington in your February issue. I'm too young to have seen the Duke's orchestra in the flesh but Mike's piece gave a flavour of what it was like to have done so – and his love for Ellington's music shone through. A career as a writer of prose, as well as of great music, beckons perhaps?

Gabriella Vincenza, Vienna, via email

Twilight of the gods beckons?

I really enjoyed reading Stuart Nicholson's interview with Charles Lloyd (and the contributions from Dorothy Darr were very interesting, and most welcome) in *Jazzwise* 293. I've seen Charles live many times over the years, and his energy for a man in his 80s is remarkable; listening to his recent albums, his creativity seems undiminished too. Always wonderful to witness, and to hear.

Yet after the feature, I felt a tinge of melancholy. While Charles shows few signs of slowing down, he can't keep going forever. In recent years we've lost Corea, Tyner, Jamal and Shorter... of the greats, and with Rollins retired, we only have Charles, Herbie Hancock, Archie Shepp and Abdullah Ibrahim still making music. And they're all in their ninth decade.

Is the era of the jazz giants finally drawing to a close? It's quite devastating to think about. Sorry for being such a downer!

George Waters, Surrey via email

Jazz: it ain't over just yet...

A very interesting letter from Philip A White ('Is jazz all over?') in your last issue (*Jazzwise* 293). I can see what Philip is saying.

But I look at the lack of critical consensus in your pages as actually a good thing – surely this reflects the diversity of tastes and interests among your writers (and readers)? After all, jazz is a broad church, and there's something for everybody – a fact that's reflected in the pages of the magazine.

On his other point, that "99 per cent of the greatest jazz has already been recorded", he has a good argument. You can see that in the fact that very few new releases get the coveted five-star reviews, whereas reissues of older material frequently do. The best records of Duke, Miles, Brubeck, Monk and Trane are unlikely to be surpassed, but that doesn't mean that jazz is over: new artists like Samara Joy, Yazz Ahmed, Fergus McCreadie, Joel Ross and others are doing great things and moving the music forward. So don't give up on jazz just yet!

Charles Wetton, Edinburgh via email

In praise of CD

As a 61 year old, I'm not following the example of my (now grown-up!) kids and streaming everything from my phone. I like to physically own my music and not be reliant on the weak Wi-Fi at home and patchy 4G/5G coverage we have down here in the West Country.

I really can't be bothered with the faff (and considerable expense) of vinyl – in any case, I sold my record player and all my LPs decades ago – so I continue to buy CDs. I was pleased, then, to read Kevin Whitlock's piece bout CDs not being dead yet in the March issue. The media seems to be completely ignorant of the popularity of this great-sounding and convenient format.

Hipsters and millennials may prefer black wax, but I like the silver stuff. As anyone who's visited a charity shop or used Music Magpie can tell you, fantastic jazz CDs can be picked up for mere pennies *[Maybe for not too much longer – Ed]*. And there are so many fantastic, great-value CD reissues these days too.

You can keep your overpriced, bulky and inconvenient records, I'm enjoying the CD boom, even if the media and industry choose to ignore it!

Alex Franklin, Barnstable, Devon via email

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